A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

Why the reanimation of the WEU

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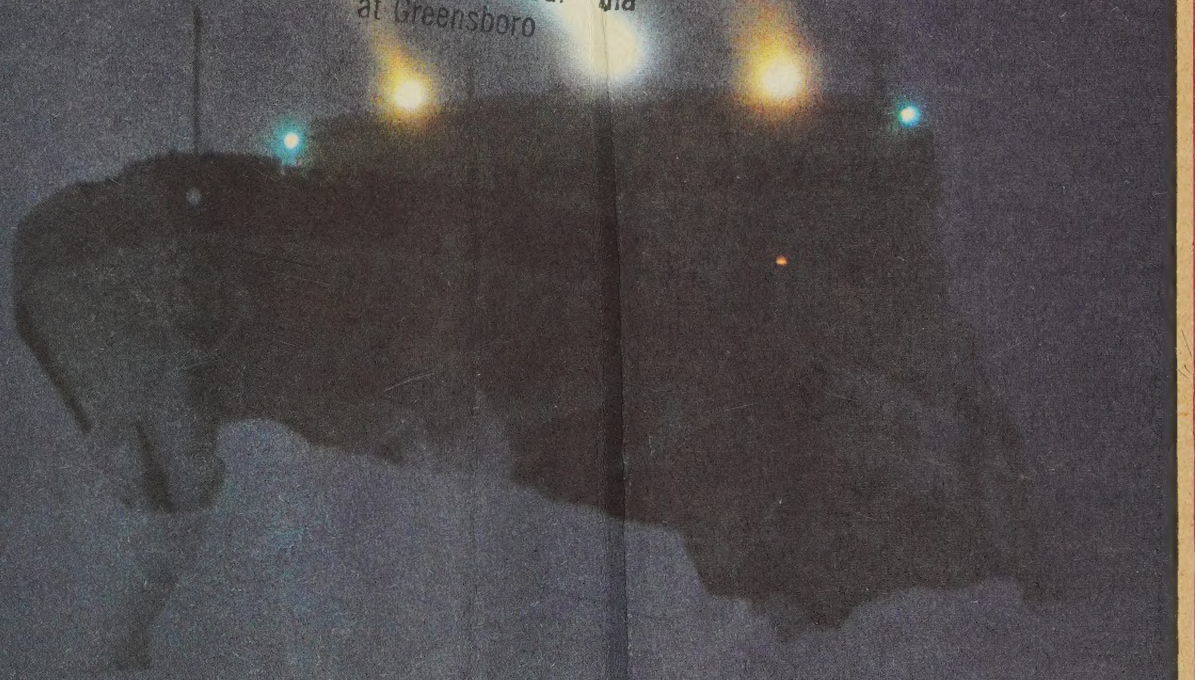


THROUGH THE ARCTIC ICECAP TO THE POLE

THE PEARL OF CHINA

NORTH YEMEN: FROM THE VEIL TO THE ULTRAMODERN

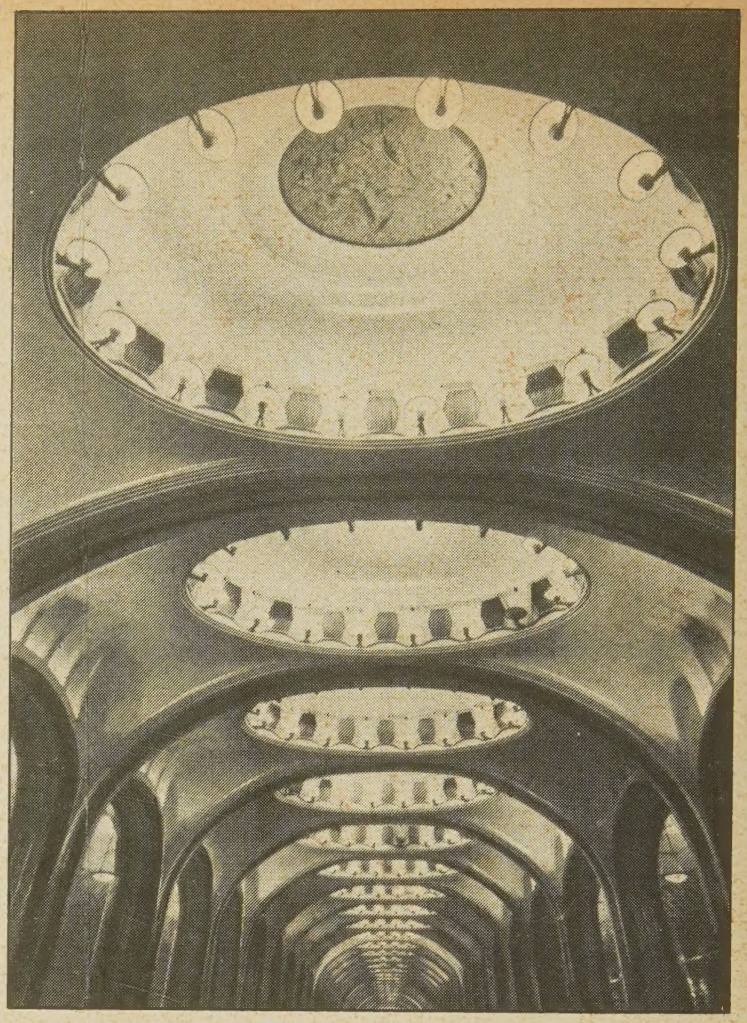
1917–1987

TIME AND PEOPLE

In June 1931 during the first five-year-plan period a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Party discussed the development of the municipal economy of Moscow City. One of the top priority projects was the construction of an underground railway: municipal transport in the rapidly growing capital had become a pressing problem.

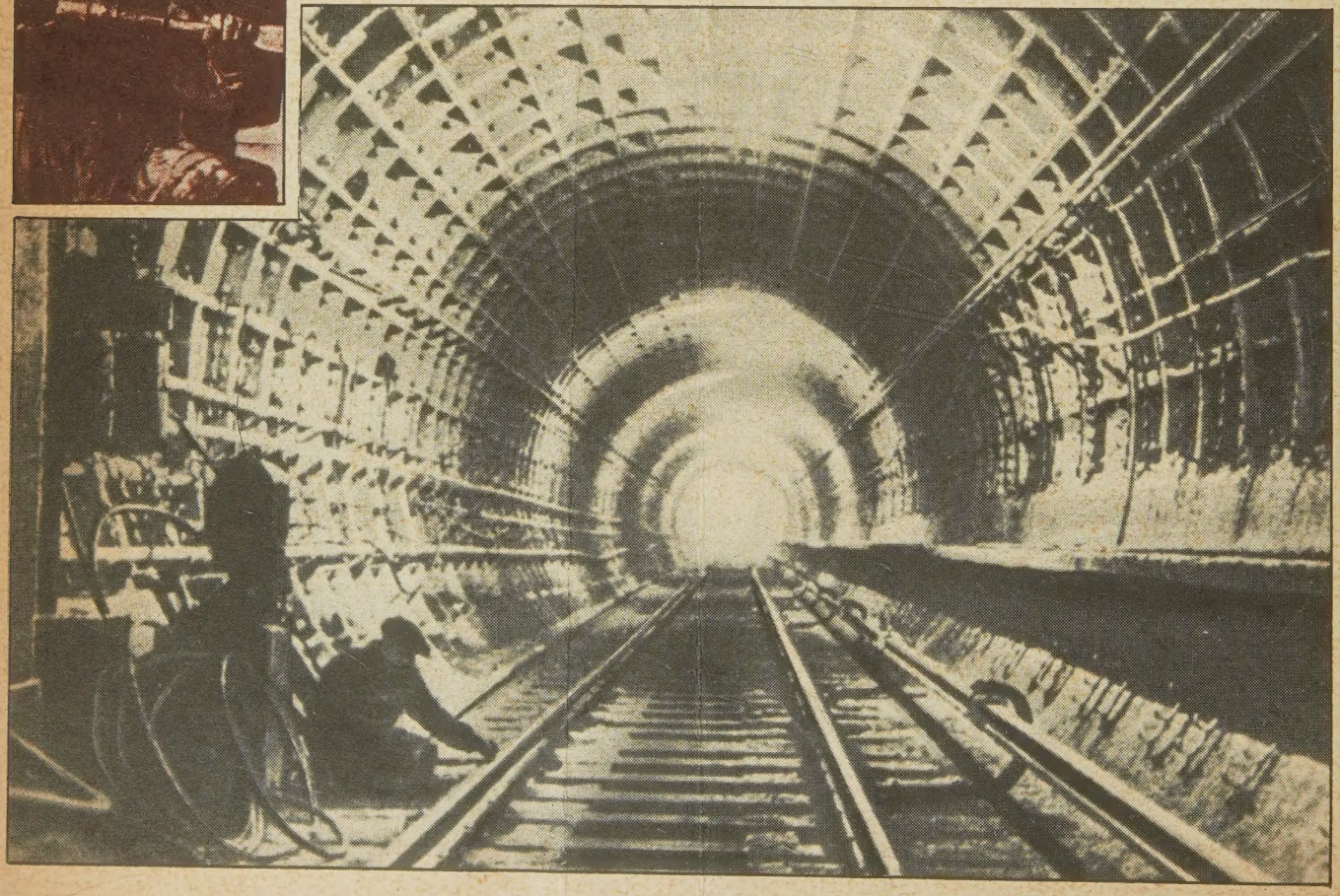
The building of the Metro became a truly nationwide undertaking. Moscow designed the Soviet Union's first tunnel shield, Leningrad made the escalators, the rails came from Kuznetsk. The Ukraine and Karelia supplied the granite, and the Crimea, the Urals and the Caucasus—the marble. To be a metro-builder was an honour, and industrial enterprises situated in various parts of the country sent their best workers and specialists to Moscow. A record construction pace was set: the first underground lines were laid inside three years—much faster than the same mileage of underground track in Berlin.

Unable to compete with the new cheap and convenient mode of transport, the horse cabs disappeared from Moscow's streets. In 1925 there had been 6,000 of them, and by 1941, there were none.



Mayakovskaya Station. Designed by architect A. Dushkin. 1938.

One of the first builders of the Moscow Metro was Tatyana Fyodorova. She was later to be awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour, to be elected Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and become deputy chief of the Metro construction.



Working in the tunnel.

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

24

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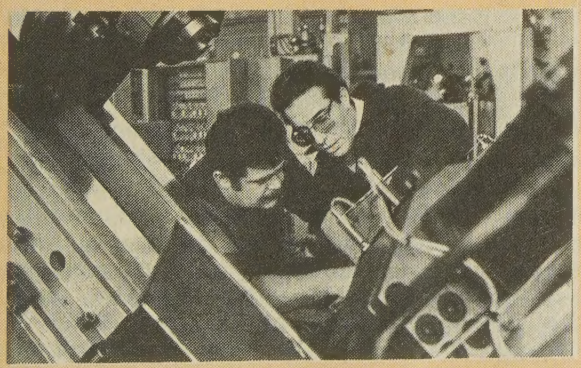

TRADE AND JOINT VENTURES - VLADIMIR KAMENTSEV on the U.S.S.R. foreign economic ties.

3 **The Sofia Metal-Cutting Machine-Tool Works (picture above) and the Ivanovo Machine-Tool Amalgamation have been integrated into a single production unit.**

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FROM OUR MAILBAG

We live in turbulent times. Never in the past has mankind been so close to real disarmament. This has become possible by virtue of the Soviet Union's wise and responsible policy. It is my firm belief that the achievements of restructuring in your country will bring about a socialism capable of more fully exploiting its advantages. I have come to realize today with especial clarity that the U.S.S.R.'s experience helps one learn how to deal with life's problems. And I do mean what I say.

MATTHIAS KLIPP
Berlin, G.D.R.

The growth of unemployment in France is very unsettling. Capitalists do not turn a hair as they abolish entire branches of the national economy and adapt our industry to the growing market for military hardware. Various U.S. and West European politicians have a hand in this too, of course. Fortunately, there are progressive forces in France that can carry on the fight for a better life. Their principal goal is to make the working people the owners of the means of production and masters of their own life.

JACQUES POTIER
Saran, France

Some Western politicians think that nuclear weapons have been all but the main restraining factor in preserving peace unbroken in Europe for forty years. As was demonstrated during the recent visit of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to the U.S.S.R., such a view of the nuclear problem is not alien to her country either. I have no doubt that this is an entirely erroneous approach. It is the absence of nuclear weapons, rather than the accumulation of them that will save the world from nuclear conflict.

Sergei LAVROV
Murmansk, U.S.S.R.

EDITORIAL

GREEN PEACE

Many scientists are of the opinion that nature's immune system has been damaged. An ecological catastrophe has in fact already begun owing to man's economic, often reckless, activity. Indeed, man has never been particularly solicitous about nature, but in the early stages nature was still able to maintain its balance. In the second half of the 20th century man has brushed all restraint aside in his treatment of the environment, and this attitude has boomeranged.

Here are some figures to consider: by the year 2000, an estimated 90 per cent of the F.R.G.'s forests will be "bald." In Holland, almost half the woods have been affected by acid rain. A million hectares of forest is perishing in Czechoslovakia. Ecological AIDS - distasteful as the metaphor may be - has long overstepped national boundaries. Cordons sanitaires, supersensitive air defence facilities and customs officers are powerless to stop it. Madagascar and Sardinia, once island paradises, are turning into lifeless deserts. Sandstorms are laying Oklahoma and Texas waste. The Ob, Irtysh and Rioni rivers are in jeopardy as is Lake Sevan. Smog is suffocating cities and industrial centres in all continents. The names Seveso, Bhopal, Chernobyl and the Rhine sound like tocsins....

The instinct for self-preservation is still there, of course. Movements for the protection of the environment have emerged in various countries. What the environmentalists have in common is not political, ideological or religious views, but concern about the state of the planet's health.

A public commission for nature conservation has recently been established in the Soviet Union under the provisional name of Green Peace. It must be admitted, however, that we should have sounded the alarm much earlier. But for restructuring and new thinking, we would have been hopelessly late. And now, on the demand of the Soviet public, our northern rivers have finally been left untampered with, and the problems associated with the pollution of lakes Baikal and Ladoga by industrial plants have been resolved.

But let us take a broader view of the matter. Is it only man's economic activity that is doing so much harm to the environment?

The problem of environmental deterioration and that of the arms race are closely intertwined. Remember Bikini: nuclear tests carried out on the atoll irreversibly exterminated all life there. Remember Vietnam: almost half its forests fell victim to ecocide. Militarism destroys nature in peacetime, too, with its troop exercises, waste of vital raw materials and pollution of the biosphere. As for nuclear war, it will cure all mankind's global problems as simply as the guillotine cures a condemned man of dandruff.

Our planet has become too small and fragile for wars and power politics, for nuclear arms stockpiles and nuclear tests. You cannot save the planet and keep it in one piece without abandoning the line of thinking and action based on the age-old philosophy that wars are permissible. New thinking and a new approach to global problems are needed. Such an approach is demonstrated by the U.S.S.R. and its allies, who are consistently putting forward concepts of a non-nuclear world and coming up with ever newer peace initiatives.

This is the only way to save the planet from ecological death. It is the imperative of our time.

TRADE AND JOINT VENTURES

Restructuring foreign economic links of the Soviet Union

VLADIMIR KAMENTSEV, Deputy Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers and Chairman of the State Foreign Economic Commission, is interviewed by New Times.

N.T. What probably interests our Soviet and foreign readers is: why the current reforms in our foreign economic activity? After all, the Soviet state has been seeking to make the most of the international division of labour since the early years of its existence.

Kamentsev. Indeed, far from seeking economic self-sufficiency, we have always favoured extensive trade links with the outside world. These links have become all the more important now that we are concentrating on speeding up the country's socio-economic development and scientific and technological progress. New objectives call for new forms of work. Hence the need for restructuring the economic mechanism, and particularly foreign economic links.

Traditional forms of foreign trade are not equal to the rate of economic and technological progress today. Commodity exchange should now be based increasingly on international coproduction and other emergent forms of cooperation, especially with socialist countries. Varying the forms of foreign trade links is aimed, on the one hand, at the more active involvement of our economic potential in the international division of labour and, on the other, at increasing the economic payoff resulting from these links.

This approach to business cooperation will naturally alter the scale and structure of foreign economic exchanges which, frankly, do not satisfy us as they are today. Judge for yourself: although the Soviet Union is an advanced industrialized power, the proportion of manufactured goods in our exports is unjustifiably small. This comes from lack of coordination between our industry and foreign trade, and from outdated methods of foreign trade organization and control.

We regard granting a number of our ministries, departments, production amalgamations and industrial plants the right to operate on the foreign market on their own as the chief way to make our foreign trade more efficient. This move is intended to get them directly involved in international economic cooperation and expedite the introduction of new research findings and engineering ideas into industrial production. Today export and import operations are transacted by 21 ministries and departments and 76 leading amalgamations and industrial plants. We have set up our own self-financing foreign trade organizations and firms for the purpose.

N.T. We are in effect going back to the foreign trade practice accepted in the early years of Soviet government when state monopoly did not exclude exports manufacturers and imports consumers engaging in foreign trade on their own. In the mid-twenties, foreign trade deals were transacted not only through the agencies of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade but also by state-run industrial trusts, syndicates and cooperative societies. Foreign capital was invited, and mixed companies, operated by foreign firms and our organizations on an equal footing, were set up.

Kamentsev. What we are now doing is comparable with the situation in the mid-twenties only in terms of the basic approach to foreign trade organization. As for the present scale of foreign economic links and, most importantly, the level of their development, they are quite beyond comparison with what obtained sixty years ago. In the twenties, our trusts and syndicates supplied the foreign market with an extremely limited range of raw materials - semi-finished products at best. Today's Soviet manufacturing amalgamations and plants which are to operate on foreign markets on their own and establish direct links with foreign partners account for two thirds of our machine and equipment export. Already this year, industrial foreign trade organizations will carry out nearly 20 per cent of all export and import operations (about 40 per cent where machines and equipment are concerned).

The quality of our foreign economic links with neighbouring countries, especially with the CMEA states, is in still more striking contrast with that of those distant years. In our economic cooperation with them we are going over from trade to profound specialization and coproduction on the basis of the Comprehensive Programme of scientific and technological progress for the period of up to 2000.

In 1986 we signed intergovernment agreements with fraternal countries, chiefly on promoting direct links and establishing a network of joint enterprises, international amalgamations and organizations. Today, nearly 600 plants and organizations are entering into direct contacts, and their total number will eventually reach 700. Besides, more than 30 joint enterprises are being set up, seven of them in the Soviet Union. Nearly 100 international amalgamations and organizations are to be established.

N.T. Such a variety of organizational forms will not only lend greater flexibility to our foreign economic activity; it will also complicate its management and control.

Kamentsev. If we adhered to the former practice of bureaucratic management from the top, which obstructed business initiative, these innovations would certainly complicate matters. But we have embarked on a course of transformation of the system of foreign economic links and restructuring our economic mechanism as a whole. This reform consists in harmonizing greater independence of export and import agencies with the overall interests and foreign economic strategy of the Soviet state.

It was with a view to improving the management of the foreign economic complex and raising the level of coordination between ministries, departments and organizations that the State Foreign Economic Commission was set up under the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers in 1986. Its function is to give guidance to the ministries and departments responsible for foreign economic relations. The

Ministry of Foreign Trade and the State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations will exercise control over foreign trade operations, seeing to it that they serve national interests. The Ministry of Foreign Trade will keep its monopoly right to buy and sell vital raw materials and items of national importance. The State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations is building industrial installations abroad and (this is its new function) supervising the construction of such installations in Soviet territory with foreign companies taking part.

N.T. Affording leading industries direct access to the foreign market does more than just improve the organization of foreign trade. This move is intended to be beneficial to the economy as a whole.

Kamentsev. We are creating in this way new economic levers of reform and acceleration. When distanced from foreign trade, industrial ministries and their factories did not care much whether their products were competitive or not. More often than not, they did not take modern trends in the development of their respective industries into account in their scientific and technical policy. Now they will have to do that, as well as keeping an eye on the situation in the world market, modernizing their production plant more rapidly, introducing the latest technologies, and getting the production of up-to-date goods under way.

Moreover, industrial ministries and factories now have a material incentive to expand exports: they are entitled to spend part of their hard-currency earnings on purchasing the machines, equipment and materials necessary for retooling, modernizing their production equipment, and stepping up their efficiency in research and development.

N.T. Today production amalgamations are more interested not only in expanding export trade, but in getting production, research and technological cooperation going as well.

Kamentsev. Correct. I have already mentioned the fact that following the establishment of direct links we have started setting up international amalgamations and organizations jointly with CMEA states. This can be described as the most advanced form of foreign economic cooperation to date.

What vistas this cooperation opens up can be judged from the record of two Soviet-Bulgarian amalgamations: one based on the Krasny Proletary plant, and the other on the Ivanovo machine-tool amalgamation. Soviet organizations wishing to establish direct links with their foreign counterparts and set up joint ventures, international amalgamations and organizations will determine their own lines and terms of cooperation, choose their own partners in the CMEA states, conclude economic agreements and agree upon prices with them, organize deliveries under coproduction contracts, and deal with many other matters independently.

N.T. In what ways will our joint ventures with CMEA states differ from those with industrialized capitalist and developing countries to be set up on the territory of the U.S.S.R.?

Kamentsev. Joint ventures of both types will enjoy preferential legal status, tax benefits and complete independence. There will be certain differences between them, however. The first difference is that the Soviet share and that of the other socialist country in the authorized capital stock of a joint venture is fixed by agreement between them. In a joint venture with a capitalist country, however, the latter's share in the authorized capital stock shall not exceed 49 per cent. If an enterprise run jointly with partners from socialist countries is included in the Soviet system of material and technical supply, it can sell its products at the wholesale prices charged on our home market. Enterprises with part of the stock owned by companies from non-socialist countries will purchase equipment, fuel and raw materials at contract prices, with world market prices taken into account, through Soviet foreign trade organizations.

N.T. Soviet joint ventures have aroused considerable interest in Western business quarters which, however, are divided as to their prospects. Some claim these ventures will prove a failure because Western companies are allegedly not interested in promoting this form of cooperation.

Kamentsev. There is ample evidence to the contrary. We have received more than 250 offers to set up joint ventures from companies in the F.R.G., the U.S.A., Japan, India, Switzerland, France, Italy, and some other countries. Protocols have been signed on the prospective partners' intention to study the technical and economic feasibility of 38 joint venture projects. Early agreements include those with Finnish firms on the procedure for setting up a joint enterprise for the processing of utility waste and polymer by-products and on the reconstruction of an Intourist hotel in Moscow.

N.T. Are joint ventures to be set up in the U.S.S.R.'s territory alone?

Kamentsev. Since this form of partnership is new to us, we shall in the main start here. This does not, of course, exclude the Soviet side increasing its share in various joint companies abroad, mostly in socialist countries. At present, we have an interest in 120 joint-stock companies abroad, and their number will continue to grow.

N.T. The Western press questions the prospects for joint ventures in the U.S.S.R. on the grounds that they will be of small benefit to foreign stockholders. It is also alleged that while Western firms seek access to the enormous Soviet market, the U.S.S.R. merely hopes to diversify its exports and earn hard currency through supplying the products of joint enterprises to the Western market.

Kamentsev. In setting up joint enterprises with the help of foreign investment, we certainly expect them to contribute to expanding the range of Soviet exports. Nevertheless, I don't see any contradiction between our desire to increase export earnings and the Western companies' desire to gain access to our market. There is probably some misunderstanding here. Some foreign firms are under the delusion that their profits will come only from the sale of jointly manufactured products on the world market. This is not so. Profit will accrue to a foreign investor from the entire output of a joint enterprise, depending on his share in the authorized capital stock. Hard-currency profit, however, is to come from exporting a certain proportion of the output.

N.T. This misunderstanding is probably due to the mistaken notion that we are setting up joint ventures for the sole purpose of increasing our hard-currency earnings.

Kamentsev. This is a mistaken notion indeed. I would be inclined to explain it in terms of ignorance of our motives for expanding foreign economic ties and increasing export trade and export earnings. For us, making a profit in hard currency is not an end in itself but a means to an end, the end being to accelerate the modernization of the national economy and expedite the solution of social problems. If joint enterprises help us along by manufacturing modern high-quality products on the basis of the latest technologies, the economic spin-off of this may prove even greater than that of importing goods. As a result, we won't have to spend our hard-currency resources on imports. This is a case of import substitution, as economists say.

N.T. Speaking of hard currency, what would you say about foreign press reports on the Soviet Union being interested in joining the International Monetary Fund?

Kamentsev. This question was asked at the press conference in Moscow on March 27, and our position as regards the IMF was clarified. We are of the opinion that this international crediting organization has many faults which prevent us joining it. The IMF has proved unable to ensure the stability of currency exchange and international lending rates. The IMF currency system is tied to the U.S. dollar, and this leaves Washington free to cover its balance of payments and even its budget deficits at the expense of other countries. In other words, the IMF currency system can no

longer offer a universal reserve currency, a stable universal currency equivalent.

In our opinion, the organizational structure of the IMF is undemocratic, with the result that only a small group of leading Western countries gains unilateral advantages from it, while the interests of the developing countries are effectively ignored. It is an open secret that the IMF's failure to prevent their foreign debt crisis has now made indebtedness a global economic problem.

For all these reasons our contacts with the IMF will probably be confined, for the moment, to consultations at expert level, and to exchanges of views on certain aspects of the international currency situation and on problems connected with reforming the international currency system.

I'd like to add that as an active participant in international business exchanges, the Soviet Union is most interested in establishing an international currency order which would take the interests of all groups of states into account, promote equal and mutually profitable trade, and rule out financial pressure and politically-motivated currency and crediting restrictions.

N.T. Some Western commentators associate the Soviet attitude to the IMF with a change in our stand on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade....

Kamentsev. They shouldn't. GATT is a universal and multilateral organization capable of improving conditions in the international trade arena. The Soviet Union has already taken steps towards closer cooperation with GATT and, despite opposition from a number of leading Western states, we plan to accede to this agreement in the long run and become one of the competent members of GATT.

Incidentally, the restructuring of our foreign economic activity will have an effect on our trade policy as well. Our customs procedures will be revised; customs duties will come to play a more important role as a factor in price formation, and a non-tariff import regulation system will be introduced. We intend to ensure that our foreign trade statistics conform to a unified commodity

The Venice summit epilogue

After a visit to Venice, the 19th-century writer Franz Grillparzer made the following comment in his travel notes: "He who can stand in St.Mark's Square and not feel his heart beat faster, can allow himself to be buried."

Perhaps it was because they felt the need for some inspiration and heartening before starting their far from easy negotiations, that the leaders of the seven most developed Western countries - the United States, the F.R.G., France, Italy, Japan, Canada and Britain - gathered on June 8, the first day of their talks, in the luxurious Doges' Palace in St.Mark's Square. "The time has come," noted the Rome paper Repubblica, "to move from traditional declarations to the adoption of concrete decisions." And solving problems is not easy.

What are their problems?

First and foremost, there are the financial and economic problems. After comparatively stable growth in recent years, experts are predicting the usual period of decline. There are many reasons for this. One of them is the weakness of the dollar, which remains the main currency in world trade. In an attempt to weaken its competitors, the U.S. is pushing up interest rates and speculating on changes in the exchange rate of the dollar on the financial market. This, necessarily, gives rise to nervousness and uncertainty in the West European countries.

Another factor for instability is the lack of coordination in foreign trade between most members of the Seven. Japan, for instance, is accused of protectionism. By imposing high tariffs on imported goods, Tokyo sets up obstacles to its partners in gaining access to its domestic market.

The discussions began with a symbolic gesture. The American President unexpectedly lifted some of the increased tariffs introduced two months ago on Japanese electronic goods exported to the United States. This was in reply to an equally symbolic gesture from the Japanese, who reportedly gave in to their partners' persuasion and announced a programme to stimulate the domestic market. Both measures were merely propaganda ploys, which would have only a minimal effect on Washington's and Tokyo's economic policies.

The F.R.G. is being accused of "laziness." Fearing for the health of its economy, it prefers not to rush into pushing up production, and expanding domestic demand, and is therefore, in effect, refusing to stimulate growth in other countries.

The contradictions between the U.S., Japan and the F.R.G. are further exacerbated because over their heads, as indeed over those of all the Seven, hangs the Damoclean sword of the external indebtedness of the developing countries. It threatens the creditors too, those who by their policy have brought the debtors to the brink of bankruptcy.

Could the leaders of the Seven have brought these problems closer to a solution in Venice?

Many observers believe that the moment was inopportune. Richard Gardner - former U.S. ambassador to Rome and now a professor at Columbia University - was emphatic about this. He noted that Reagan's political weakness at home did nothing to prompt him to get down to financial problems properly. Nakasone is already being criticized for his economic policy, and in a couple of months is due to leave office. Kohl has worries about the differences in his government coalition over Euromissiles. In France the leadership is divided against itself. Mulroney of Canada knew that his popularity was minimal. As for Thatcher and Fanfani, they arrived in Venice on the eve of general elections in their countries.

In other words, no one was inclined to take any risks, let alone make any concessions to other members of the Seven. No signs of optimism ever came from San Giorgio Island, where the working sessions were held.

The problems of strengthening security, which cannot be achieved without nuclear disarmament, occupied an important place on the agenda. What prompted the leaders of the seven countries discuss this problem was Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal to clear Europe of medium- and shorter-range missiles, in other words achieve more than what was envisaged by the "zero option," which the West at one time so insistently advanced. On the eve of the talks, President Reagan had

classification to be introduced in international trade in 1988.

The Soviet Union will certainly coordinate its active and varied trade policy with other CMEA states, because all of them are interested in establishing a common trade system which would promote mutually profitable economic exchanges, free of restrictions and discrimination, with the non-socialist world.

N.T. speaking of restrictions and discrimination, many Western companies wishing to trade with the Soviet Union complain of obstacles set up by NATO in the way of high-technology exchange, which is the most promising form of foreign trade.

Kamentsev. We leave it to those wishing to do business with us to worry about that. The Soviet Union is prepared to cooperate with anyone who wants to introduce new elements into international business transactions. Neither ourselves, nor our partners are interested in organizing joint production based on old technologies. What's the use of investing in a new enterprise equipped with outdated technology and doomed, therefore, to failure? After all, we want such an enterprise to bring in a profit, which it can only do provided it employs new technology. For this reason we are considering only offers that provide for the use of modern technologies.

To take a broader view of the issue, there is a very simple point I'd like to make in conclusion. Economic cooperation presupposes reciprocity, protecting each other's interests, and renouncing any import or export restrictions, boycotts or embargoes.

In the modern world business relations must be based solely on equality and mutual trust. Unfortunately, certain Western countries have made a practice of subordinating economic and trade relations to unseemly political calculations. These negative trends in international economic relations corroborate the urgency of the proposal put forward by the 27th CPSU Congress to establish an international economic security system within the framework of which all impediments to world economic links could be removed. ■

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repeatedly given assurances that the United States seeks agreement with the Soviet Union. But the President made it clear that he was in no hurry to sign such a treaty.

Nor is there any unity on this issue in Western Europe. While some countries view prospects for nuclear disarmament in the Old World realistically, the F.R.G., for instance, insists on retaining the Pershing 1A missiles deployed on its territory, which are considered its property, but which are fitted with American nuclear warheads. France and Britain object to Bonn enjoying such a privilege, believing - and not without reason - that this would give the F.R.G. the status of a semi-nuclear power. They prefer, however, not to speak about their own nuclear potentials.

There are also people, and there are many of them, in Western Europe who fear Soviet superiority in tanks, aircraft and manpower. Yet many military experts have more than once proved on the basis of figures that the talk about overwhelming Soviet superiority is a myth, irresponsibly promulgated by certain mass media organs and defence ministries seeking additional military allocations. While agreeing in principle to the abolition of nuclear missiles in Europe, they are at the same time calling for a buildup of conventional weapons. But NATO, as the Boston Globe noted with reason, already spends 100 billion dollars more each year than the Warsaw Treaty countries on military needs.

The leaders of the Seven could not formally adopt a final decision on Euromissiles. Such a decision remains within the competence of NATO and must be reached in Reykjavik, where NATO foreign ministers convene after the Venice meeting. But it would be a mistake to think that the ministers will not take into account the views of the leaders of the Seven.

They are fully aware that besides the military-political aspect the problems of disarmament have their economic aspect. It is worth recalling that the unprecedented U.S. federal budget deficit of 220 billion dollars is due primarily to excessive military spending.

In Venice discussions of so-called regional problems were acute. They centred around Washington's policy in the Persian Gulf. On the eve of the meeting, the Pentagon officially confirmed reports that it had sent a U.S. naval force headed by the aircraft carrier Saratoga to the area.

The palace where the Seven met.

TASS photo

The Americans tried their utmost to draw their allies into this dangerous game.

The first reaction was clearly not in the United States' favour. Italy's Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti said it was necessary to take steps to stop the war between Iran and Iraq. He added that this was a job for the United Nations. As for Nakasone and Kohl, they told the American President bluntly that such actions would violate the constitutions of their respective countries.

Washington had to back down. At a press conference, President Reagan's Assistant for National Security Affairs Frank Carlucci and White House chief of staff Howard Baker explained that all the United States was counting on was "diplomatic support" from the Seven, in order that with the United Nations' help to get the Iran-Iraq war stopped as quickly as possible. And that, they maintained, was the aim of the draft resolution the U.S. tabled in Venice.

On the eve of the meeting politicians had said that bringing their positions closer by only a millimetre would be a satisfactory result. Journalists, not without sarcasm, summed up the Venice talks as follows: the leaders of the Seven hoped to bring their policies and economies closer by a few millimetres, but Europe and North America are continuing to drift further apart by two-odd centimetres a year.

Participants in the talks also considered other problems, specifically how to combat AIDS, the Japanese New Frontiers research programme in the field of biotechnology, and problems of the environment.

NIKOLAI MIROSHNIK and PAVEL NEGOITSA

Venice

PERSIAN GULF

Intruders

● THREE WARSHIPS SET OUT FROM U.S. EAST COAST PORTS AT THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK IN JUNE AND HEADED FOR THE PERSIAN GULF. SEVEN OTHERS HAD ARRIVED THERE LONG BEFORE.

"The U.S. is running ever higher risks in the Persian Gulf," "Anxiety rules in Washington" is how observers are commenting on the Reagan administration's steps to build up the U.S. military presence in one of the world's most explosive regions.

The public and Congress were disturbed by reports that the Pentagon and the White House had seriously considered a "preemptive" strike against Iran if the latter deployed a new missile complex on its coast. Many agree that such action would be tantamount to "a United States' attack on a sovereign country" and "spell an end to U.S. neutrality in the Iran-Iraq war."

At the time when the U.S. Navy started moving more ships and planes into the Gulf zone, William Crow, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, admitted that this mission could prove costly. There were no guarantees, he said in Congress, that the operation would go without losses. And this in a situation where Americans have still not recovered from the shock of losing 37 seamen on the frigate Stark attacked by an Iraqi plane.

It would seem that the Stark tragedy should have compelled Washington to consider the consequences of its actions in the Persian Gulf. But the reverse is true. One cannot help getting the impression that it regarded the incident merely as a welcome pretext for increasing the scale of its intervention.

Representatives of the administration, the President included, refer to their commitment to "freedom of navigation," uninterrupted oil supplies to the West, and the "security of their friends." However, the region accounts for only five per cent of U.S. oil imports. As for the U.S. allies in NATO, whose interests Washington so zealously guards, they are by no means happy about its actions and, for all the pressure brought on them, are trying to reduce their support to symbolic gestures. For their part, the region's countries that maintain close links with the U.S. - such as Saudi Arabia and Oman - voice no desire to host U.S. ships or provide air cover for them.

The administration's "Soviet threat" argument sounds downright anachronistic today. The Americans have been using it to justify their military presence in the region since 1949. That this "threat" has not manifested itself in any way over the past decades does not embarrass Washington. Its real purpose is to use the aggravation of the situation in the Gulf to set up a major military base there, preferably with the allies' cooperation. The "mailed fist" in the Persian Gulf would enable the U.S. to threaten those countries of the region whose political line might not be to Washington's liking.

As for freedom of navigation and the settlement of the Iran-Iraq conflict, the whole international community, including the Soviet Union, is genuinely interested in both. Sabre-rattling and threats of force only serve to hinder the attainment of these objecties.

ANDREI OSTALSKY

CHINA - JAPAN

No forgetting the past

● YUKO KURIHARA, CHIEF OF JAPAN'S DEFENCE AGENCY, HAS VISITED CHINA. IT WAS THE FIRST VISIT TO BE PAID BY THE HEAD OF THE TOKYO MILITARY DEPARTMENT TO PEKING.

Kurihara is a man close to Kiichi Miyazawa, the present Minister of Finance and one of the likely candidates for the premiership. His visit followed a crowded schedule: he was taken to the Chengdu military district, visited an airbase at Hangzhou and warships in the port of Qingdao, was shown firing and bombing drills and met Zhang Aiping, Minister of National Defence, and Yang Dezhi, chief of the General Staff of the People's Liberation Army.... The Defence Agency chief asked for an audience with Deng Xiaoping, but his request was not granted.

Tokyo attached great importance to the visit: Kurihara was to have dispelled China's apprehensions about the revival of Japanese militarism. Judging from press reports, Peking had other causes for discontent as well: the Japanese court had ruled that the Chinese students' hostel in Kyoto be owned by Taiwan rather than the People's Republic of China, despite the fact that Tokyo had formally renounced the "two Chinas" policy.

As a result, Kurihara had to make excuses most of his time in Peking. Tokyo was sharply criticized there for having exceeded the military spending ceiling (which is fixed at one per cent of the gross national product). In the light of the tragic lessons of history, Defence Minister Zhang Aiping said, Japan should restrict the buildup of its Self-Defence Forces so as not to arouse the anxiety of neighbouring countries. China and other Asian countries are seriously concerned about the chauvinist and nationalist tendencies in Tokyo ruling quarters. While Japan is trying to forget recent history (as is evidenced, in particular, by striking manipulations with school textbooks), China neither wishes, nor is able to forget it. After Kurihara's departure, Deng Xiaoping spoke again of the danger of a revival of militarism in Japan.

Tokyo is trying somehow to reduce the strain. Prime Minister Nakasone said that in concession to China he would not this year visit the Shinto shrine of Yasukuni, the spiritual centre of militarism, where homage is paid every August 15 to those who started the war in the Pacific. Such symbolic gestures clearly do not suffice, however. China and other neighbours of Japan are against it becoming "a major military power."

LEONID MLECHIN

SOUTH ASIA

A humanitarian act

● WHEN INDIA AIRLIFTED HUMANITARIAN AID TO THE TAMIL POPULATION OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA, THE COLOMBO GOVERNMENT CONDEMNED THE MEASURE AS A VIOLATION OF THE ISLAND STATE'S SOVEREIGNTY.

Shortly after the Sri Lanka army had mounted a massive offensive aginst the Tamil-populated northern peninsula of Jaffna late in May, India called on the island's government to settle the ethnic conflict peacefully.

Relations between the Tamil minority, constituting roughly a fifth of Sri Lanka's population and concentrated chiefly in the island's north and east, and the Sinhalese majority (a problem of long standing) have had their ups and downs since 1983.

Tensions have again been mounting since early this year when, in response to Tamils' demand for autonomy, the Sri Lanka government imposed an economic blockade on Jaffna Peninsula on the grounds that combatants of a number of Tamil extremist organizations were based there.

The government troops' offensive, launched at the end of May, was accompanied by bombings and shellings causing heavy loss of life. Hundreds of refugees joined the 130,000 who had crossed the narrow strait to the neighbouring Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Deprived of food and fuel, tens of thousands of people found themselves in a desperate plight. Epidemics were rife.

Under the circumstances, the Indian government could not stand idly by, all the more so as India's own 60 million Tamils were solidly behind those of Jaffna. It should also be taken into account that external forces have been drawn into the conflict. Some units of the Sri Lanka army are Pakistani-trained. The commandos carrying out punitive operations in the north of the island have been trained by agents of Israel's Mossad secret service. Acting through its partners, Washington is attempting to take advantage of the ethnic conflict and gain a foothold on that strategically placed island.

The Colombo government's action aimed at ending the ethnic conflict "once and for all" by force of arms has cancelled out India's good offices and caused much suffering to innocent people.

On June 3, nineteen fishing boats with food and medicines on board hired by the Indian government and flying Red Cross flags headed for Jaffna without escorts.

The peaceful mission undertaken in the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine of non-violent action was stopped by Sri Lanka's warships about halfway to its destination. Tension in the Foreign Ministry's press room, from which newsmen followed the negotiations at sea between Indian representatives and the captain of the Sri Lanka destroyer, reached its peak by midnight after G. Parthasarathi, chief of the Foreign Ministry's press department, announced that the Indian caravan had had to turn back at gunpoint.

In the middle of the following day (June 4) five unarmed transports of the Indian Air Force, escorted by four fighter planes, took off from Bangalore for Jaffna. As on the previous occasion, foreign newsmen were given a chance to satisfy themselves that the transports carried food and medicines intended to ease the plight of the Tamil population. India informed Sri Lanka that the load would be dropped by parachutes as humanitarian aid.

My journalist colleagues on one of the planes told me that hundreds of people had run to collect the food and medicines. India's humanitarian act achieved its purpose, but provoked a protest from the Sri Lanka government.

India's strategic objective, Minister of State for External Affairs Natwar Singh said in a New Times interview, was, as ever, to promote a peaceful settlement of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka within the framework of the island state's unity and territorial integrity.

Delhi **LEONID ZHEGALOV**
our own correspondent

Is this where they're hearing the Irangate case! Tell them the hearse's waiting.
Cartoon by Vsevolod Arsenyev

NEW ZEALAND

In Washington's black books now

THE NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENT HAS PASSED A LAW TO KEEP NUCLEAR WEAPONS OUT OF THE COUNTRY.

One of the Labour government's first moves was to ban nuclear-powered ships or ships with nuclear weapons on board from the ports of New Zealand. This brought a sharp reprimand from the United States. The government, trade unions, the peace movement and the majority of the population took the rebuke calmly and with dignity. Shortly afterwards, a bill was submitted to parliament legally confirming the "nuclear-free New Zealand" policy and guaranteeing the preservation of this status in the event of a change of government.

Washington's pressure on its ally, now marked out as unreliable, began to mount. The Americans secured the support of London and Canberra. Sanctions, including trade embargoes, were threatened. A sharp increase in the influx of American visitors reminded New Zealanders of the overthrow, in 1975, of Australia's Labour government, which had roused the anger of the U.S. authorities. Finally, Washington suspended the fulfilment of its commitments to New Zealand within the framework of the ANZUS bloc.

Washington dreads the prospect of the "anti-nuclear contagion" spreading. Developments throughout the 18 months it took Parliament to discuss the bill, and the campaign that culminated in the signing of the Rarotonga Treaty making the South Pacific a nuclear-free zone, were followed closely in Japan, Southeast Asia, the island states of the Pacific, and in Europe. Having visited New Zealand, Masashi Ishibashi, ex-chairman of the Japanese Socialist Party, announced his party's intention to publicize the idea of making the North Pacific nuclear-free too. Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and the two previous governments of Fiji also declared against nuclear ships calling at their ports.

Now Washington has been angered by New Zealand's position to the point of officially striking it off the list of its allies. A bill to that effect has been submitted to Congress.

Having adopted the New Zealand nuclear-free zone, disarmament and arms control bill, and dissociated itself from the strategy of nuclear deterrence pushed by its senior partner in ANZUS, New Zealanders have committed themselves to a nuclear-free world.

VALERY KUDINOV

Beriozka in Yugoslavia and Greece

The famous dance company Beriozka begins its tour of Yugoslavia and Greece with a performance in Belgrade on June 26 and in Athens on July 10.

This company enjoys wide popularity both at home, and abroad. Its art can be said to be an expression of the Russian soul: its openheartedness and strength, its beauty and talent, gentleness and mystery.

...Twenty girls in long dresses, all stately and proud, seem to float across the stage. Each carries in her hand a branch of silver birch. They dance to the melody of the Russian folk song "A birch tree in the field." The girls move, and the aromas of the spring awakening of the Russian countryside with its open spaces, birch groves and fields of wild flowers are almost palpable.

In the numerous reviews and articles about the company's performances there is always a string of superlative epithets. The one used most often is "unique." Beriozka is indeed unique. There is nothing like it anywhere in the world.

In 1959 the World Peace Council awarded Beriozka the Gold Peace Medal for its inspired and unequalled work in art. It was the first and only Soviet company to receive such an award.

The dance with the silver-birch branches from which the company takes its name was a successful choice after a great deal of hard work on the part of the gifted choreographer Nadezhda Nadezhdina. She also produced the whole series of dances that form "The Seasons" cycle. These include the routines "Northern Lights" and "Farewell to Shrovetide."

For spring, a time of light and the flowering that awakens dreams in a young girl's heart, there is also a dance and quadrille. Summer and autumn convey their own messages.

Beriozka performances have been seen by audiences running into tens of millions. It has won applause and ovations on all five continents in the almost 40 years of its existence. Its foundation marked the birth not only of the company, but also of a new style in Russian scenic choreography.

Today the company is headed by Mira Koltsova, formerly a leading soloist. She is carrying on the work of Nadezhda Nadezhdina and at the same time creating her own choreographic style.

This will be the second time Beriozka will be visiting Yugoslavia and Greece. For its new tour the programme has been considerably changed. Audiences will see a Siberian quadrille, the Russian dances "The Chain," "Designs," "Festal Dance," "The Joker," "Russian Porcelain," and the waltz "Beriozka." The second half of the programme is taken up entirely by "The Seasons" cycle.

In Yugoslavia the company will give performances in Belgrade, Kragujevac, Zagreb and Ljubljana, and in Greece their tour takes them to Athens, Herakleion, Patras, Ioannina, Corfu and Salonika.

The whole company sends the friendly peoples of Yugoslavia and Greece their best wishes and is looking forward to meeting their audiences.

VLADIMIR BENYUKH

The Beriozka.

An old city in its second youth

The celebration meeting of the mayors of capitals and large cities in all continents held in Berlin at the beginning of June is mentioned on page 76 of the booklet listing the events to mark the 750th anniversary of the city. Altogether, the calendar of events includes more than 2,200 gatherings, meetings, exhibitions, varnishing days and other ceremonies.

The burgomasters must certainly have been satisfied. Berliners have plenty to show. There are probably few cities in the world where the slogan "public services for the people" has been put into practice so effectively.

Rebirth

It is impossible to give the exact age of Berlin. Some time at the end of the 12th century, craftsmen, merchants and tillers of the land settled in the place where the River Spree divides. Two settlements went up along its banks - Cölln and Berlin. It is believed that they received the status of towns some time between 1230 and 1250. However, 1237 has been taken as the date of the city's origin, since that is the date of the first written reference to Cölln, which subsequently merged with Berlin.

The city has seen and experienced much in its seven and a half centuries. There were periods of prosperity followed by years of regression, when reaction gained the upper hand over progress, and the forces of war over the forces of peace.

But if Berlin does not know the exact date of its birth, the date of its rebirth can be precisely identified - May 8, 1945. On that day the nazi Reich, and with it its capital, ended its existence in blood and ashes. Two and a half million Berliners were left in the debris of World War II without water, gas or electricity, threatened by hunger and disease, morally vanquished and bereft of hope. Many felt there was nothing to be done. But help came from the most unexpected quarter - from those whom only yesterday nazi propaganda had portrayed as nonhuman - Soviet soldiers. It was from their hands that Berliners received their first pieces of bread. Today General Nikolai Berzarin, the first Soviet commandant, is remembered with warmth and gratitude. Not for nothing does one of the finest squares in the city bear his name. Together with "first-hour activists" - German Communists and anti-fascists released from concentration camps or emerging from the underground - the soldiers of the victorious army gradually returned life to the city.

In a sense it is also possible to speak of the day when the city was again reborn - August 13, 1961. Right after the end of the war the Western powers - the Soviet Union's former allies in the anti-Hitler coalition - worked for the division of Berlin. In June 1948 they introduced a separate currency reform for the western sectors only, and in September the reactionary majority of the city council ostentatiously moved from the Soviet sector to the British. In October they were followed by most members of the magistracy. The public services were divided: transport, electricity, gas and water supplies.

In the Teachers' House on Alexanderplatz we spoke to Dr Rolf Liebold, press chief of the Berlin magistracy, who is also responsible for the jubilee celebrations.

"With the division of the city," said Dr Liebold, "Berlin's economic organism was torn in two. A large part of the factories were in the western part, so we had to build up certain industries from scratch. That was not easy, especially in view of the economic and psychological war being waged against our young republic. No border as such existed. Only after August 13, 1961, when the government of the G.D.R. took protective measures to strengthen its border, were we able to start the planned development of the economy. The results you can see for yourselves...."

Through the window a panorama of the city opened up - a modern city, but one that has retained all the charm of the past.

Berlin today has a mighty industry. It is also a major centre of science and culture. But perhaps most important of all, Berlin today is a city for the people.

132 housewarmings a day

Just five weeks after the end of the war, the Communist Party of Germany declared that the first task was to build homes in Berlin. In 1946, when rubble and ruins were still to be seen in the streets, the first housewarming took place in the first new residential district. In 1971 the 8th Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany decided that by 1990 each family must be provided with a flat in which each member would have a separate room.

Here are some figures: in 1970,19 new flats were completed in Berlin daily. In 1980, 49 flats. Today 132 families move into new homes every working day. All in all, since 1971 the people of the city have been provided with 300,000 new flats with all amenities. This means that something like a million people live in new flats. That is an immense number, considering that the total population of the city is just 1,240,000.

"Berlin today," continued Dr Liebold, "is a huge construction site. You probably noticed that when driving through the streets."

Take the district dominated by the Nikolaikirche. That was where the city had its beginnings. Now new residential houses have been built there, but not concrete and glass monstrosities. Each house was built in keeping with the architectural styles that predominated in the 17th-18th centuries. Behind the Gothic and Baroque facades there are more than 700 modern flats for 1,500 people. The ground floors are given over to small shops, cafés and snack bars where a place is always to be found....

Other historical places in the city are being lovingly restored: Platz der Akademie, Friedrichstrasse, which from the end of the 19th century was regarded as the city's shopping and cultural centre. Along its two-and-a-half-kilometre length more than 3,000 flats are going up, as well as kindergartens and schools, 150 shops and restaurants, a cinema, a building for

the Wintergarten variety theatre, galleries and discothèques. The city authorities in Berlin identify three main directions in city building. First, the construction of new housing estates on the outskirts. Three such estates have already gone up in the eastern suburb. But the building of "dormitory" districts requires the development of new land, the construction of communication and transport systems, and the building of social institutions and services. That proves expensive. Apart from the economic aspect, there is also a moral-psychological one: the ties between periods of history, traditions and the character of the city are lost. Our German friends find it preferable to follow another course, namely that of building new houses in the centre of the city to replace those that have been pulled down or were destroyed in the war.

An example of the new buildings in the centre is offered by those around Nikolaikirche and Friedrichstrasse. The facade of each building blends with the historical style of the district. It should be noted that the construction of houses in the centre costs less. There is no need to build new roads for transport, lay down electric cables, a water system, sewage or gas mains. And in an old district there are already enough shops and schools.

"Why then was preference given for so long to building on new sites, and not in the centre of the city?"

"Because, for one thing," replied Dr Liebold, "it was necessary to reduce the acuteness of the housing problem and that could be done only through large-scale industrtial construction. Secondly, the house-building factories were for a long time geared to the output of large panels. For the construction of one or two houses in the centre, a flexible technology is required and not standard structural parts. Now we have factories that produce such parts in small batches. Although that sometimes costs more, on the whole it is worth it. And it has the effect of improving the appearance of the city.

"How much does each flat cost the city?"

"It depends. On average, a flat with 60-65 square metres of floor space costs 110,000 marks. Rent remains at a low and stable level: from 0.8 to 1.2 marks per square metre, depending on the amenities. On average, a family spends 5 per cent of its income on rent. That covers only a third of maintenance costs."

Another direction in Berlin's housing programme is the reconstruction of old buildings, including those known as "barracks," with boxed-in yards. Typical examples are the houses along the two-kilometre-long Wilhelm Pieck Street. Most of the houses were built about 100 years ago. Today all that remains of that construction era is their walls. Behind those walls are new flats with every amenity. The yards have been extended to make room for gardens and children's playgrounds.

How many people in the city are on the waiting list for new homes? Dr Liebold replied: 75,000. A third of the applications come from families, and two thirds are from single people, divorcees or young people who have come of age.

An explanation is required at this point. The 75,000 mentioned above are not homeless. They find their present flats unsuitable either from the point of view of conveniences, or because they have to rent a flat in a privately-owned house. In Berlin, like everywhere else in the G.D.R., there are no strict limits on floor space. For instance, each youngster when he reaches the age of 18 can join the waiting list for a separate flat no matter how much space his parents have. When a baby is born to a young married couple, they can count on being provided with a flat - with a separate room for each member - in a matter of months, if not weeks. Incidentally, today there are 26 square metres of living space per every citizen of the republic, be they adults or infants (in 1970 there were 20.3 square metres). So, according to yardsticks applied in many countries, the G.D.R. has long solved its housing problem.

New look for old Berlin.
From the weekly NBI (G.D.R.)

Dresden is 781 years old

The above was written in a felt pen on a piece of cardboard we noticed stuck to a Trabant on a Dresden street. The hint was obvious - look at all the fuss being made about Berlin's jubilee when our city is older. Really, the driver need not have felt slighted. It is true that in this jubilee year a great deal is being done for Berlin. But much is also done in other cities, Dresden included. Construction is in full swing along the entire street that runs close to the one where the Trabant car stood. And the buildings are going up in the traditional style, a new housing estate. Or take the neighbouring town of Meissen. Today it is famed not only for its porcelain, but for the artistic ingenuity with which old buidlings are being restored and new ones being put up.

The picturesque town stands on the slopes of a hill with a castle on its summit that drops down to the Elbe and looks exactly as it did a century ago. It was spared by the war, but has not been spared by time. Now it has been decided to restore its past beauty.

The man in charge of the project, Gottfried Herrlich, born and bred in Meissen, is enthusiastic about the job. He took us to the square in front of the town hall. He identified the houses where the bas-reliefs have been carefully recreated, along with whole facades. In Meissen practically every building is an architectural monument, a work of art. Herrlich and his colleagues - 650 in all - believe that their most important task is to preserve all that can be preserved. They started on the job only three years ago, but the first results are there for all to see. The methods chosen are in many ways similar to the strategy used in Berlin. If the walls are still strong, then new modern flats are built inside them. Other buildings are so dilapidated that they have to be demolished, but the new house that goes up is a copy of the old one, based on architectural plans preserved in archives.

"While reconstruction is under way, the inhabitants have to move out. For how long?"

"Reconstruction work takes from 6 to 18 months. Simple modernization, installation of toilets, showers and baths requires 2 to 4 weeks and does not necessitate people moving out."

Gottfried Herrlich is optimistic - he believes that by the 40th anniversary of the G.D.R., i.e., by 1989, Meissen will have no housing problem.

And Meissen is no exception. All this goes to show that the goal set by the 8th Congress of the SUPG - to build 3.5 million flats for 10.5 million people by 1990 - will be achieved.

Local authorities keep a strict check on the distribution of flats. The lists are displayed where anybody can inspect them. Two thirds of the flats built in the past 15 years went to workers' families, one in four, to newlyweds, and one in ten, to large families (with three or more children). It can probably already be said that by 1990 the G.D.R. will be the first country in the world to have done away with the housing problem on a socially just basis. There will be enough homes for all, and just as important, they will be well within the reach of all.

LEV YELISEYEV
and NIKITA ZHOLKVER
New Times correspondents

Berlin - Dresden - Meissen - Moscow

Whither the WEU?

"The old car that stood so long abandoned in the garage is on the road again," Alfred Cahen, secretary-general of the Western European Union (WEU), said in a metaphorical reference to the reanimation of the organization he heads. Why have the WEU Seven - France, Britain, West Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries - restarted the "old car's" engine? Why is the vehicle being modernized and where is it going?

Euro-NATO

The Western European Union, which was founded in 1955, stood in he "garage" for three decades. The leaders of Western Europe gave preference to the North Atlantic limousine. They thought it more powerful and more economical to run. But the Americans laid their hands firmly on the steering wheel. The West Europeans had to content themselves with taking a back seat. When Washington went into sharp turns, they closed their eyes and kept quiet. But as they gradually gained economic independence and political weight, the passengers began to reach for the wheel. Washington, however, made it plain that it had no intention of getting out of the driver's seat.

"The Americans and (West) Europeans are increasingly at odds not only over trade and economic issues but over foreign and security policy as well," writes John Palmer, European editor for the British Guardian. "There are deep-seated worries among the population of Western Europe about U.S. policy and its leadership of the Western alliance." It is this growing distrust of the senior NATO partner that is one of the reasons for the reanimation of the WEU.

In justification of his advocacy of broader military cooperation on the basis of the WEU, British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe argues that this is an "insurance policy" in the event of any divergence in the strategic interests of the U.S. and its allies. For instance, if Washington should turn away from Western Europe and transfer its sympathies to, say, the Pacific region. "We need to be alert to trends in American thinking which might diminish our security - perhaps not today or tomorrow but in the longer term," Howe said in a recent address to the Brussels Royal Institute of International Relations.

At first, the idea of reviving the Union caused serious alarm in the U.S. It was seen as an instance of crass ingratitude, moreover, fraught with the danger of a split in the Atlantic alliance. In April 1985 the U.S. administration told the leaders of the Seven pointblank that there was no need to reanimate the WEU and that the problems troubling the Europeans could be discussed within the NATO framework. In reply came the explanation that it was not a matter of replacing the North Atlantic alliance but of an additional military contribution by the Seven, of creating something of European subsidiary of NATO.

The West European leaders' initiative was consonant with the insistence by the U.S. over the years on the strengthening of the European alliance. To this end Washington had had recourse to many expedients - from the traditional "Soviet threat" bogey to undisguised blackmail. For instance, at the beginning of 1984 Senator Sam Nunn proposed that Congress discuss the question of a partial reduction in the number of U.S. military personnel in Europe unless the allies increased their contribution to NATO. In June the same year the Senate turned down Nunn's proposal but warned the allies that it could return to the question unless they substantially increased their military expenditure. Later Senator Nunn admitted that "the main objective" was "to provoke European allies into doing more."

In January this year former presidential national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski proposed that 100,000 servicemen be withdrawn from Europe and formed into airborne divisions for use in the Persian Gulf or in Central America. Projects of this kind have been invariably rejected as running counter to U.S. interests. The latest such decision was taken by the House of Representatives on May 8. Nevertheless, these plans and discussions undoubtedly exerted definite psychological pressure on the West European politicians. At any rate, they cite the possibility of a reduction of the U.S. military presence in Europe as one of the main reasons for reviving WEU.

The West European leaders were even more disquieted by the prospect of the reduction of the nuclear arsenals in Europe. Some were even panic-stricken. French Defence Minister André Giraud qualified the results of Reykjavik as a "nuclear Munich." The alarm was sounded also by many other opponents of nuclear disarmament. "The Europeans must wake up," Belgian politician Armand De Decker, Liberal floor leader in the WEU Assembly, wrote in the newspaper La Libre Belgique. "In Reykjavik, Mr Reagan let us down by proposing to Mr Gorbachev the withdrawal of the Euromissiles. Europe will soon be almost naked. It must organize its own defence."

In an effort to reassure their panicky colleagues, sober-minded West European leaders reminded them that the "zero option" did not originate in Reykjavik - it was a NATO initiative, they said, approved by all the member countries without exception. Doing away with the American and Soviet medium-range missiles did not mean stripping Europe bare, they argued. It would still be overarmed. But the "vigilant" remained deaf to these arguments.

Besides fears - real and imaginary - economic considerations also played no small part in the revival of the WEU. For

Turning their backs on a nuclear-free Europe: Helmut Kohl, Caspar Weinberger and Manfred Wörner, escorted by a serviceman, at an F.R.G. proving ground.

From Stern (F.R.G.)

years the West European arms manufacturers had complained that national fragmentation and small-quantity production prevented them from competing successfully with their overseas partners. Today, too, Western Europe buys from the United States about eight times more arms and military technology than it sells. To operate on an equal footing it was necessary to combine efforts. Integration would make it possible to end U.S. domination of the West European military market. Moreover, this could also compensate for the substantial reduction in recent years of arms sales to the developing countries. The drop in oil prices and the growing indebtedness have sharply limited the purchasing capacity of the importers. As a result, French military exports, for instance, fell from 7 billion dollars in 1984 to 4 billion dollars last year.

Charter of tension

The object of West European military integration, its architects maintain, is to help strengthen security. Some actually see in it a lever for hastening the economic and political rapprochement of the EEC countries. But this is a publicity gimmick. What is the true picture?

The concept of "security" comprises a wide range of components. The WEU is being resuscitated mainly on a military basis. It is essentially a matter of knocking together a European defence community. The idea is not new. Thirty-five years ago, on May 27, 1952, an agreement on the establishment of such a community was actually signed. But the French National Assembly refused to ratify it, and so the project was laid aside until a more auspicious time.

Some years ago it was decided in Paris, Bonn and several other capitals that this time had come. The reanimation of the WEU came to be seen as the first step on the way to organizing a "Eurodefence" system. In addition to the Seven, it is planned to draw into military cooperation other EEC countries as well. How do its planners visualize this updated "Eurodefence"? The principles on which it is to be built, or the "charter of European security," as French Premier Jacques Chirac put it, are still being discussed. But the common denominator is already discernible.

It is proposed to create a West European "nuclear umbrella" based on the French and British strategic potentials. Besides coordination of action and division of tasks and objectives, the possibility of the joint development and production of nuclear weapons is also envisioned. During the March visit to Paris of the British Defence Secretary George Younger, agreement was reached on setting up a group of experts to study the question. The defence committee of the French National Assembly proposed that the possibility of developing a long-range cruise missile be discussed with Britain.

The West European "nuclear umbrella" could acquire impressive dimensions. According to Newsweek, by 1991 London and Paris will have in their arsenals a thousand nuclear warheads capable of striking at the territory of the Soviet Union.

Some strategists believe that in time the F.R.G. will also have access to European nuclear weapons.

The "nuclear umbrella" is to be backed by conventional armaments, the growth of which will be promoted by cooperation at all stages - from joint development to the production of military technology and armaments. There is a precedent for such cooperation. For instance, Britain, F.R.G. and Italy jointly designed and put into production the Tornado fighter-bomber. More than 500 such planes have already been produced and the figure is to be doubled in the not distant future. London, Bonn, Rome and Madrid recently set up a joint cartel for the development and manufacture of new "Eurofighters." Beginning with 1995 the air forces of this "quartet" will get roughly 800 such planes.

At the present time the West European countries are considering some 30 joint military projects. These include a programme for the creation of a third generation anti-tank weapon, known as the TRIGAT, new surface-to-air and air-to-surface missile systems, and also combat helicopters. The creation of a European land-based anti-missile system patterned after SDI is being studied.

In other words, as yet unborn "charter of European security" already smacks of a charter of tension-building.

Against the stream

While stepping up their efforts in the military sphere, most West European leaders are highly reluctant to promote peace. "We are still in great uncertainty," Foreign Minister Hans van den Brock of the Netherlands said, referring to the attitude of the West European leaders to the Soviet proposal to rid the continent of operational-tactical missiles parallel with the elimination of medium-range missiles. An attempt to reach agreement on this question was made at a meeting of 14 foreign and defence ministers of WEU countries held in Luxemburg on April 28. But nothing came of it.

Bonn: "Yes, but..."

On June 4, after endless foot-dragging the F.R.G. Bundestag voted in favour of the "zero option" on American and Soviet medium- and shorter-range missiles in Europe.

Having agreed to the "double zero option," the right wing has by no means dropped its objections. Strauss, for instance, said after the coalition talks that with the abolition of the missiles a step would have been taken towards "decoupling" the U.S. from Europe. And Chancellor Kohl in his government statement had a great deal to say about the dangers that would allegedly accrue to the F.R.G. following the removal of the missiles. The "double zero option" can therefore be accepted only if it excludes the 72 Pershing 1As (range up to 740 km).

Politicians from the CDU/CSU seek to justify their determination to retain these missiles at any cost on the grounds that they belong to the "potential of third countries," and consequently cannot be the subject of Soviet-American negotiations. However, in Geneva "third countries" is interpreted as the European nuclear powers - Britain and France. Federal Germany does not belong to that category. The nuclear warheads for the Pershing 1A missiles belong to the Americans. Is someone in the F.R.G. planning, having retained the missile carriers, to creep into the nuclear club through the back door?

The Pershing 1A missiles will soon have served their term. At the Bonn Defence Ministry plans are ready to replace them with the updated Pershing 1Bs.

It should be said that no unanimity on the question exists in the coalition itself. Politicians from the CDU/CSU insist that the Bundeswehr cannot give up the Pershing 1A missiles. The Free Democrats, on the other hand, stress that preserving these missiles is not a precondition for Bonn's agreement to the "double zero option."

The government statement offered Chancellor Kohl a good opportunity to reply to the whole series of peace initiatives put forward by the recent meeting of the Warsaw Treaty countries' Political Consultative Committee. But apparently the federal government is not yet prepared to give such a reply. Kohl touched only on some of the proposals made in Berlin. He approved of the socialist countries' desire "to seek the formation of comprehensive system of peace and security, which would embrace both the military and political, as well as the economic and humanitarian fields." Kohl promised to reply to the new thinking in Moscow with steps that would lead to stronger cooperation. But he still maintains that no alternative exists in the foreseeable future to the concept of nuclear deterrence. And therefore "we do not share the wish to see nuclear weapons removed completely from Europe." So it is too early to speak of a new approach in Bonn to problems of security.

Newsmen covering the Luxemburg meeting were told that the conferees were unable to define their stand because they had been unable to acquaint themselves with the details of the Soviet proposal. But no one was taken in by this diplomatic ruse. The journalists were unanimous in the conclusion that the Seven had failed to reach agreement. Moreover, different stands were taken not only by the delegations of different countries but by representatives of the one and the same country. For example, West German Defence Minister Manfred Wörner together with his French counterpart André Giraud said a categorical "no" to the liquidation of operational-tactical missiles in Europe, while West German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher said he was not opposed to such a "double zero option." London, too, subsequently declared in principle for that option.

Analyzing the substance of the disagreements, the Belgian Libre Belgique wrote: "While some at Luxemburg spoke about limitation of armaments, others wanted to reduce the matter to limitation of... the framework of disarmament." This approach was reflected also in the final communiqué. In it the ministers declared their agreement to the elimination of medium-range missiles and a 50-per cent reduction in the strategic arsenals of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A.

Many observers found the position on operational-tactical missiles hard to understand. For quite some time this problem had been played up by West European politicians as the main obstacle to agreement on medium-range missiles. When the U.S.S.R. proposed reducing also this class of weapons to nought, yesterday's critics suddenly fell silent. And some even changed their tune completely.

West European politicians and strategists cannot but take account of the fact that the idea of getting rid of nuclear weapons has the support of the vast majority of West Europeans. To go against such a powerful tide of opinion is not easy. Hence ways of circumventing it are being sought.

At the May meeting of the alliance's nuclear planning group in Stavanger, Norway, representatives from the U.S.A., the F.R.G. and Britain gave an unofficial discussion to the problem of how - in the event of the American-Soviet agreement on Euromissiles being signed - to fully make up for the cutback in American nuclear missiles in Western Europe. Plans are afoot, in particular, for the deployment in Western Europe of B-52 and B-1B strategic bombers armed with air-launched cruise missiles. The FB-111A medium bombers with nuclear weapons on board are to be stationed in Britain and other countries. The F-111, F-4 and F-17 fighter-bombers based on the continent will be fitted out with short-range cruise missiles. Great importance is attached to ensuring a permanent presence of American surface ships and submarines, armed with sea-launched cruise missiles, in the off-shore waters around Europe.

The final decision on the elimination of medium-range and operational-tactical missiles in Europe is to be adopted at the NATO Council session which opened on June 11 in Reykjavik. Much depends on the West Europeans and, in particular, on Bonn's position.

VYACHESLAV BOIKOV

Brussels

The Chancellor expressed the hope that an agreement on medium-range missiles would mark the beginning of the process of disarmament, which would embrace all types of weapon. He considers the following measures necessary and possible: first, a 50 per cent cut in Soviet and American strategic offensive weapons; second, the early signing of a convention banning chemical weapons, and, third, "setting up a stable low-level balance of conventional forces throughout Europe."

The measures listed by Kohl would indisputably mark a huge step forward. The question that arises is how to guarantee them. And here the inconsistency and ambiguity of Bonn's position is revealed. The West German leaders are well aware that the reduction of strategic offensive weapons is indissolubly linked with the prevention of the spread of the arms race to space. What Kohl is suggesting is reaching agreement in Geneva on the joint solution of the problem of the ratio of offensive and defensive weapons as well as on the application of the ABM treaty. At the same time, as he put it, "a sharp reduction in offensive weapons should inevitably affect the need for, and volume of, defensive systems." That deliberately vague wording is open to any interpretation desired.

Although the federal government stresses its interest in a universal ban on chemical weapons, it refuses to take the first step - to set up a zone in the centre of Europe that would be free from such weapons of mass extermination, as has been suggested by the G.D.R. and Czechoslovakia. It is hard to find signs of realism in Bonn's position on conventional weapons. Kohl welcomed "the readiness to remove in the course of reductions inequalities that might arise in certain elements" expressed in the Warsaw Treaty countries' communiqué. But he deliberately shortened the quotation, leaving out the part that specifies that the elimination of inequalities should take place "through corresponding reductions in the forces of the one who has more," in other words, concessions must be mutual.

It is not surprising that many people in the F.R.G. doubt the sincerity of the government statement.

ALEXANDER TOLPEGIN

our own correspondent

Bonn

Fierce fighting raged for a week along the "green line" that divides Beirut into the western and eastern sectors controlled respectively by national patriotic and right-wing Christian forces. All roads connecting West Beirut with other parts of the country were cut off; all, that is, but the Karame Road which had been laid by patriots in almost no time over the mountains, under the cover of cliffs and steep precipices, beyond the range of right-wing Christian batteries. "Karame" is the Arabic for "dignity," and the builders gave the road this name as a token of their determination to uphold their national dignity against Tel Aviv and its allies.

Each time I drove along that road cut through the cliffs I couldn't help associating it with the prominent Lebanese statesman who had held ten times the post of Lebanon's Prime Minister since 1955. The road was not named after this great patriot but, though fortuitous, the coincidence proved symbolic. It is with Rachid Karame that the Lebanese have identified their national dignity over the past three decades.

I recall February 6, 1984, when the rebel citizens of West Beirut freed their sector, by force of arms, from the right-wing Christian phalangists, who had all but entrenched themselves there under the protection of Israeli occupiers and the U.S. Sixth Fleet concentrated in the bay of Beirut. It was clear that the then Lebanese government, which had signed the Agreement of May 17, 1983, with the occupiers and allowed into Lebanon the "multinational force" consisting of the troops of the United States and its NATO allies was in its last weeks, if not days.

As they pulled down street barricades and buried their dead, armed citizens of Beirut, their nerves still taut after the fighting of the day before, told each other hopefully: "Rachid Karame alone can save our country. If he heads the government, everything will change."

At that time President Amin Gemayel sent a message to Tripoli, where Rachid Karame then lived, suggesting that the popular politician should form and head a new cabinet. The previous cabinet had resigned.

It is safe to say that Rachid Karame received his tenth and last mandate from the majority of the nation. The Lebanese knew him well and hoped his return to office would put an end to the almost decade-long nightmare of the civil war, Israeli aggression and imperialist intervention.

Born in Tripoli in 1921 into the family of a Sunnite religious and public figure, Rachid Karame was elected to parliament at the age of 30, and became Prime Minister at 34.

In 1957, he was a leading opponent of the Eisenhower doctrine and Lebanon's being drawn into the pro-imperialist

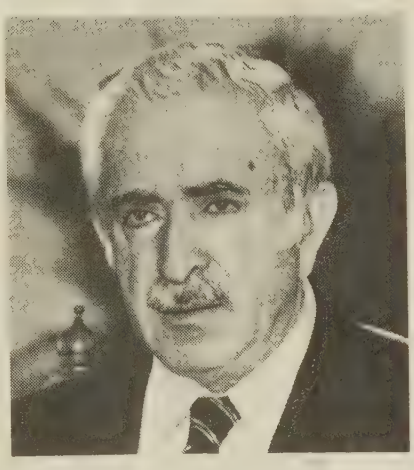
Karame means dignity

Baghdad pact. He vehemently objected to the landing in Lebanon (in the summer of 1958) of American troops, using which the then President Camilee Chamoun hoped to suppress the patriots' anti-imperialist action. After the Americans had been ousted, Rachid Karame became still more popular and regained premiership.

It was then, no doubt, that Washington entered him on the list of enemies of the United States' "vital interests." Tel Aviv also regarded him as an enemy: upholding Lebanon's national interests, Karame came out strongly in support of the national rights of the Palestinian people, friendship and cooperation between Lebanese and Palestinians, and their mutual assistance and mutual support. He continued to uphold this line in 1982 after Israel, with the open connivance of the United States, had invaded Lebanon, laid a bloody siege on West Beirut and massacred Palestinians in their camps at Sabrah and Shatilah. At that time Rachid Karame exposed the American-Israeli collusion and proclaimed Washington responsible for the Zionist occupiers' crimes on Lebanese soil.

In 1958, Karame took officce as Prime Minister after the American intervention had suffered defeat. In 1984 he accepted the premiership only after the outgoing government had been compelled to revoke the Agreement of May 17, 1983, and the "multinational force" had left.

Rachid Karame's enemies, both at home and abroad, were determined to prevent him forming a government and to paralyze it after he had succeeded in putting his cabinet together. It was only thanks to Rachid Karame's wisdom, rich experience, patience and persistence that there had been no government crisis for exactly three years since then. This was essential



Rachid Abdul Hamid Karame.

to restoring the atmosphere of national accord in the country and preparing the appropriate reforms. Karame's efforts to end the fratricidal "camp war" between the gunmen of the Shiite organization Amal and the Palestinians, and his support for the patriots fighting to get the Israeli occupiers out of southern Lebanon, are common knowledge. All this naturally fitted in with the political profile of the late Rachid Karame.

The late.... I had met him on many occasions during the turbulent developments in Lebanon, and the news that he had died in a helicopter explosion on his way from Tripoli to Beirut came as a shock. I realized then how easy it was to "wipe out" Karame. He had spent every weekend in his Tripoli home, flying there and back to Beirut by helicopter on fixed days and at fixed hours. His helicopter would fly over districts controlled by the right-wing Christian forces disgruntled by his work to prepare radical political reforms and strengthen friendly relations with neighbouring Syria. His helicopter could easily have been shot down....

His home in Tripoli, where he received numerous visitors (Soviet journalists included) was virtually unguarded. And although political murders have, alas, long been all in a day's work in Lebanon, it looked - to me at any rate - as if no attempt could possibly be made on Karame's life. And now....

The enemies of the Lebanese people did not dare act in the open. Their agent (or agents) managed to plant a bomb under the Prime Minister's helicopter seat. The bomb had been made just deadly enough - with infernal precision - to kill only the occupant of the seat. The Minister of Defence and the escort officers were wounded, but the helicopter was able to land. The investigation, entrusted to the army, began almost at once.

The eight years I spent in Lebanon as a correspondent saw several major political assassinations there. None of them was solved. The forces and figures interested in keeping each murder a mystery were too powerful and influential. Hired killers can be tracked down, of course, as has not infrequently been the case, but what about those behind them?

So, who killed Rachid Karame? The democratic public of Lebanon and leaders and the press in other Arab countries have only one answer to this question: "Agents of Tel Aviv." It is Tel Aviv that wants a "political vacuum" and tension in Lebanon so as to use the explosive situation there as a pretext for again invading southern Lebanon and crushing the patriotic forces and Palestinians. Israeli troops have recently been concentrating in areas bordering on Lebanon.

The Western press predicts that the death of Rachid Karame will inevitably be followed by new and tragic developments in Lebanon; there is no dearth of instigatory pronouncements. They recall, for instance, that the late Prime Minister tendered his resignation on May 4, but that the President did not formally accept it despite pressure from right-wing Christian extremists. It is implied that the latter might have "resolved the issue" in their own way.

The extremists, Tel Aviv and Washington certainly had accounts to settle with the patriot - and common accounts, at that. The old maxim "Look for the criminal among those who stand to gain from the crime" will help find the right answer to the question "Who killed Rachid Karame?" As for the findings of the investigation -if any - they will only serve to spell the answer out more fully.

EVGENY KORSHUNOV

It's beyond me how a plane from the F.R.G. could land in broad daylight in Moscow, and what's more, in the very heart of the city. Everybody here is talking about it and putting forward the most varied ideas. What is the view in Moscow?

KAROL LESNICZEK
Warsaw, Poland

TAKING UP A POINT

New Times political analyst LEV BEZYMENZKY replies:

THE PLANE INCIDENT: INCREDIBLE BUT TRUE

Perhaps you know that one of the most popular TV programmes in the Soviet Union is called "Obvious, but incredible." It is very well conducted by the distinguished Soviet scientist Sergei Kapitsa, and always attracts large TV audiences. The event that took place on May 28 in the centre of Moscow comes under the heading: Incredible but true. If anyone had asked me (or for that matter anyone else, including our top military personnel) if such a thing was possible, the reply would in all cases have been a most emphatic "No!" A couple of days ago I had occasion to meet Sergei Kapitsa. "It sounds like pure fiction!" he exclaimed, when our conversation turned on the flight. But the incredible proved true, and so it is impossible not to stop and think about it.

For myself, I began by looking for historical parallels and precedents. Border violations (including air borders) can in principle be regarded as a "casus belli" (cause for war). Moreover, border incidents in the past have on more than one occasion been used to unleash wars (one recalls, for example, the attack staged by the nazis themselves on a German radio station in the border town of Glewitz in August 1939). Another instance is the bombing - again staged by the nazis - of the German town of Freiburg in May 1940. Attributing the air attack to the allies, Hitler wanted a pretext for bombing British and French towns.

You could say: why look for such ominous parallels when it is probably no more than the escapade of a young man looking for quick fame? I reply: we do not yet know all the details. It could be that the legacy of the past oppresses me too heavily and I can't wave aside the terrible lessons of past catastrophes. Perhaps. But I keep asking myself: couldn't the day of the flight have been the day world war three began?

It didn't. But I'm sure that any of those authors in the West who write books about a future war could devise a logical sequence of events that could have followed from such an absurd violation of the air border and led to a military catastrophe.

For that reason the impudent flight faces all of us - both East and West - with a problem: how well are we all guaranteed against an accident, a fateful (not like that of May 28) concatenation of circumstances? Unfortunately, not well enough. To be more precise: inadequately, because as well as guarantees there are counterguarantees, such as the unrestrained stockpiling of weapons, their increased complexity, and, consequently, a greater mathematical probability that something could go wrong, break down, or a mistake be made by those who service the weapons. So once again (perhaps for the thousandth time) we have to stop and think about the urgent need to alter the course of world events decisively, alter it towards a reduction in arms - all and every kind.

That's one thing. The next is the problem of an appropriate reaction. On May 28 everything ended peacefully. But I am far from convinced that the reaction in, say, Washington would have been the same had a plane with a Red Star hovered over the White House lawn or in Bonn, had such a plane landed on the grounds of Schaumburg Castle. Would one of the soldiers or officers, brought up in the spirit of fear of the "Red threat" have pressed the fateful button?

The Soviet public, naturally, has its grievances against the air defence system in the Kohtla-Järve district. Decisive steps were taken to set things right. But that, of course, is our business. What is indisputable, however, is something else, and that is the importance of the overall international situation, the way people feel, those serving in the armed forces included, the spiritual tone of the world community. Incidents are complex affairs, and their outcome is effectively decided in seconds. But it is people who make the decisions. There it is - another aspect of the human factor....

Incidents vary. Mathias Rust accidently got through, but he did not fly this way by chance. He had the necessary maps, and he had the extra cans of fuel. But surely those he consulted or those who instructed him (I'm ready to bet such people existed) couldn't but have foreseen the risk he (and therefore they) were taking. Wasn't it clear what he was jeopardizing when leaving his country - which is, incidentally, the launch pad for American Pershings and cruise missiles - and setting off as an uninvited guest of ours? We are of course hospitable, but there are limits.

One thing has to be rejected out of hand: the suggestion that it was just a childish prank.

Mathias Rust could not but have known what he was doing. Moreover, according to reports in the West German press, Rust told a representative from the F.R.G. embassy in Moscow that he had been prompted by "political motives." What exactly they were he did not specify, but he had said enough. The motives are political, but so are the consequences: the violation of international law, of the laws of the Soviet Union (as well as of Finland, the country from which he took off), and, last but not least, a desired (or perhaps planned?) excuse for a hostile campaign against the Soviet Union in certain Western papers and magazines, always on the lookout for a pretext.

More specifically, Herr Rust and his instructors could not but have been aware

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Good will a catalyst of understanding

Charles Wick interviewed

Charles Wick, director of the United States Information Agency (USIA), came to Moscow for the opening of the exhibition "Information U.S.A." His attitude to newsmen was most unusual. The interview with an Izvestia correspondent ended with Mr Wick slamming the door and promising to complain to the appropriate authorities (!!). Moscow journalists have become unaccustomed to such treatment. He treated the Sovetskaya Kultura correspondent in much the same manner, and ended the talk at the Novosti Press Agency in an outburst of temper.... Is this a new trend in the American "information service"! Our correspondents were luckier. The USIA director was in a tranquil mood, which is, of course, preferable.

"In the West a lot is being said and written about the restructruing now under way in the Soviet Union. Some claim that it presents a threat to the West, others welcome it, and still others call it in question. This is your second visit to the Soviet Union in the past 18 months...."

"And I have noticed great changes. Glasnost taken in conjunction with the promises to get military tension reduced is very attractive. The restructuring will make it possible to achieve what is absolutely essential in 5-7 years: to build an infrastructure that will enable the Soviet Union to compete successfully with the rest of the world. The Soviet Union is a great power, it has immense resources, many talented people, and colossal potential for competing with the leading capitalist countries. Even more could be achieved by cutting back part of the country's expenditure on defence."

"There is a big imbalance between what the Soviet people know about the United States and what Americans know about the Soviet Union. How do you think it can be eliminated?"

"I believe through an honest exchange of movies and information, without 'prettying up' the picture, or emphasizing the negative aspects of life in our two countries. Unfortunately, we are not yet free of bias."

"Soviet journalists and their colleagues from the socialist countries are deprived of permanent accreditation with the U.S. State Department. Why?"

"As we see it, journalists from the Warsaw Treaty countries enjoy greater rights in Washington than American correspondents in the socialist countries. In Moscow, for example, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and its press centre are situated in different places. In other words, the practice that existed until recently that allowed journalists from the Warsaw Treaty countries to walk freely into the State Department has come into conflict with the principles of security and maintaining a certain degree of secrecy."

"The Voice of America broadcasts on the short wave band. Most Americans listen to medium wave. What do you think about the possibility of achieving a certain parity in this field? For instance, in the form of a Soviet radio station in the vicinity of American territory, say, in Cuba?"

"I explained to Soviet representatives that for a number of years the question of using medium wave frequencies has remained unresolved between the U.S. and Cuba. The reason lies in legal difficulties. I hope that your competent representatives will display understanding at this stage."

(At the news conference in the American embassy in Moscow, the USIA director gave a different answer. "I pointed out that it was impossible to broadcast permanently to the U.S. on medium waves from Cuba.")

"Did you discuss the expansion of cooperation in the field of the mass media in Moscow?"

"Yes. For instance,,I spent several hours discussing this subject with the chairman of the U.S.S.R. State Committee on Radio and Television Alexander Aksenov. We exchanged a number of ideas and reached agreements I would describe as promising."

"Specifically?"

"We discussed the possibility of arranging iterviews, as well as debates between the leaders of our countries by means of satellite, and prospects for cooperation in the field of TV documentaries. All that, it seems to me, would promote better understanding between our peoples. We have everything needed for that. Good will must serve as a catalyst, and we have found it here."

EVGENY ANDRIANOV and VLADIMIR GALIN

Reasonable sufficiency and illusory superiority

IGOR MALASHENKO

The Warsaw Treaty states, meeting recently in Berlin, declared once again that their military doctrine is defensive, proceeding as it does from the need to preserve military equilibrium at the lowest possible level and from the expediency of reducing military potentials to the limits sufficient and necessary for defence alone.

Some people fear that nuclear disarmament could destabilize the international situation and upset the quilibrium achieved over decades. Their fears are understandable in view of the tension and distrust between nations accumulated over the same decades. The Soviet Union shares this anxiety because its interests would in no way be served by the international situation being destabilized by unbalanced arms cuts. For this reason Mikhail Gorbachev proposes to implement nuclear disarmament in stages, with the balance at a level of reasonable sufficiency maintained at each stage. But how are we to determine which arms are sufficient and which redundant? How do we reverse the arms race by this means?

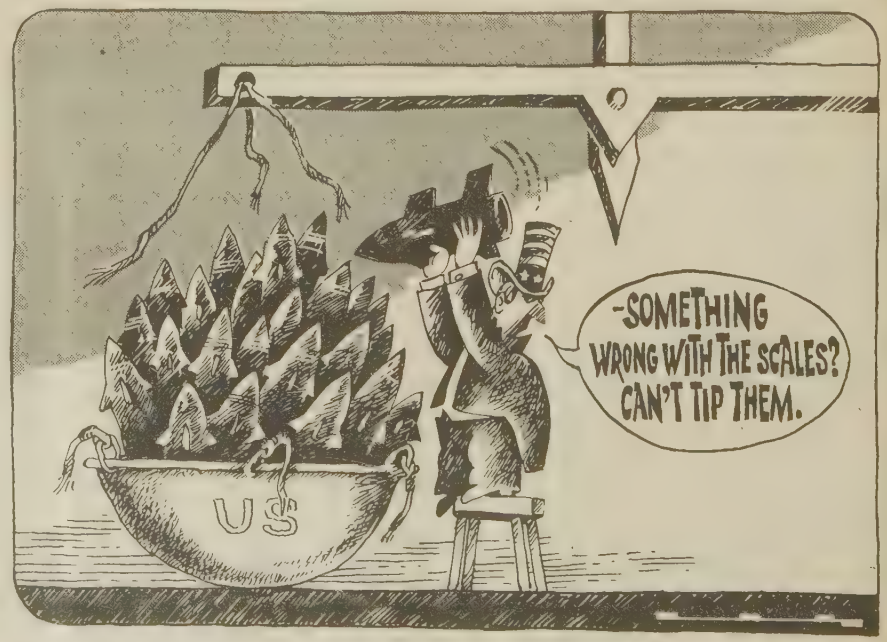
Strategic blackmail

Experts are seeking to determine the size and structure of the strategic forces that will help preserve stability during radical cuts in nuclear armaments. This problem was studied by an ad hoc group of the Soviet Scientists' Committee for Peace, Against Nuclear War Threat, whose findings were made known at the Moscow Forum For a Nuclear-Free World, for the Survival of Mankind and published in April of this year.

Using the latest methods of analysis, computer models among them, the group arrived at the following conclusion: there are several optimal variants of radical nuclear arms cuts which not only preserve stability but even consolidate it at each stage of disarmament. The members of the ad hoc group proved that, if applied, the principle of reasonable sufficiency could help bring about a nuclear-free world.

Everything depends on how the question of sufficiency is tackled. For instance, Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger recently told Congress in his annual report that over the next few years the United States would have to bring up the number of up-to-date strategic B-1B bombers to 100, instal 50 MX missiles and build five more Trident submarines, simultaneously creating a new generation of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it would develop posthaste a large-scale ABM system, thereby giving fresh impetus to the arms race.

"Sufficiency" of this kind has obviously nothing to do with the elimination of nuclear weapons in stages, though mutual understanding seemed to have been achieved on this question in Reykjavik. On the contrary, the targets set by the Pentagon chief indicate Washington's desire to attain its political goals by relying on nuclear armaments. But what goals can be realized with the help of nuclear weapons? Even the Reagan administration, which first declared it possible to win a nuclear conflict, has been compelled to admit that nuclear war cannot be waged and that there can be no victors in it.



Drawing by N.Shcherbakov

Far from all in the United States seem to understand this. Indeed, how are we to explain Weinberger's persistent statements, including the most recent ones, that in the event of a nuclear conflict Washington would seek to "restore peace on terms favourable to the United States." This formula is merely a hypocritical euphemism for a blunt demand for victory in nuclear war.

Yet U.S. policy-makers are not pinning their main hopes on the possible use of nuclear weapons for the achievement of their goals. By using nuclear weapons as a means of psychological pressure and blackmail, they are counting in the first place on securing tangible political dividends for themselves.

Let us again cite Caspar Weinberger. He defines the tasks of the U.S. nuclear strategy in purely "defensive" terms: "not only to deter actual aggression but also to prevent coercion of the United States, its allies and friends through the threat of aggression." But such a threat does not exist. The Soviet Union has never threatened to use nuclear weapons or military force.

As often happens in similar cases, the charges against the Soviet Union are merely mirror image of the goals Washington itself seeks to achieve. The revelations of an American hawkish theorist, Colin Gray, help make things clear. Unlike Weinberger, Gray is not bound by diplomatic protocol and can therefore be more outspoken. "Deterrence is not sufficient as a statement of the mission of U.S. strategic forces. Those forces also have laid on them by foreign policy a range of possible compellence duties. (with regard to the Soviet Union — I.M.) In other words," Colin Gray explains, "there may be occasions when the United States will have urgent political need to compel or coerce the Soviet Union to do things it is unwilling to do." He could hardly be more explicit.

The votaries of such a policy seem to forget that the Soviet Union has never yielded to blackmail, nuclear or otherwise, and has always found a means to counter it. Of course, even American hawks understand that, in the context of strategic parity, many threats of the time when the United States had overwhelming nuclear superiority have lost their effect. However, they still hope they will be able to put the Soviet Union in a situation where it will have to cave in to pressure.

This is the task by which Washington is guided in deciding what quantity of weapons is "sufficient" for the Pentagon - as much as is needed to gain superiority and make the Soviet Union change its foreign policy to meet U.S. demands.

However, the excessive quantities of nuclear weapons accumulated in the world today devalue the very concept of superiority, because the use of even a small proportion of these arsenals will inevitably lead to global catastrophe. What superiority can one then speak of?

The inertia of thinking

Regrettably, most people still think in the old terms of "superiority" and "victory." But to find means of security consonant with present realities, one should abandon outdated military political stereotypes and work out a new approach to political thinking. It was by this conclusion that the Soviet Union was guided in advancing its programme for a nuclear-free world.

As regards Washington, it seeks to take advantage of the gap between the present reality and the streotypes deeply entrenched in peoples' minds. It is impossible to gain a military superiority that would ensure victory in a nuclear war. This does not mean, however, that an illusion of superiority is unattainable, an illusion that is likely to bring appreciable political benefits.

Washington is aware that not only U.S. military potential but also the political and psychological aspect of the present strategic situation should be taken into account. Attaining the objectives facing U.S. nuclear strategy, Caspar Weinberger stresses, depends not only on actual military capabilities. "It also involves our adversaries' perceptions about those capabilities."

Such attention to the "ephemeral" psychological factor is not accidental. U.S. politicians believe that a subjective evaluation of the American-Soviet strategic balance could substantially influence political decision making in other countries and the outcome of conflicts in various parts of the world. Therefore even the illusion of superiority, Washington believes, can strengthen the U.S. position worldwide.

How can such an illusion be created? It is usually held that the superiority of one side in quantity of arms, the creation by it of weapon systems not possessed by the other side, or the elaboration of a more adroit strategy can be regarded as proof of military superiority.

When the Soviet nuclear potential was much smaller than the American one, the United States tried to consolidate its superiority all along the line - in quantity and quality of armaments and in the sphere of nuclear strategy. But when strategic parity was achieved, Washington had to realize that it would be unable to gain serious advantages through the further buildup of strategic carriers. Therefore it tried to create an impression that the American nuclear potential is superior in quality and possesses greater dynamism.

Constantly growing, dynamic strategic forces look preferable to and "stronger" than a more static potential, Washington believed. For that reason it agreed to some quantitative restrictions on the arms buildup, as recorded in the SALT treaties, but sought to keep a free hand for the development and modernization of weapon systems that were expected to bring not only military but also considerable political and psychological advantages.

This was little short of an attempt to realize the U.S. "technological superiority" of which Washington seems so confident. This "superiority" was to be demonstrated by the deployment of cruise missiles, the steadily increasing accuracy of warheads, and the devising of ever more sophisticated weapons. If one side creates an entirely new weapon system that the other side does not possess, common sense suggests that it has gained superiority (though this system may be absolutely worthless from the military point of view). To bridge the gap, the Soviet Union will have to produce the same weapon, but meanwhile the United States will take a new stride forward.

On the one hand, U.S. nuclear strategy is supposed to demonstrate the confidence of American strategists - in fact scarcely felt by many of them - that nuclear war can be fought "rationally" and that it can somehow be "limited" and "controlled." On the other hand, the Soviet Union is faced with the threat (if it refuses to follow the rules worked out by American strategists) of its most valuable socio-political institutions and economic installations being destroyed by the United States. Washington hopes that the combination of these sinister factors will make the Soviet Union docile.

Contrary to trite notions

What does the Soviet Union counterpose to this policy? Unlike Washington, Moscow is not trying to wrest political concessions from the United States with the help of nuclear weapons. But nor will it tolerate attempts to exert pressure on the Soviet Union.

The most simple and, at first glance, "natural" way of countering nuclear blackmail is the repetition of actions undertaken by the opponent, the

copying of its strategic forces and the strategy devised by it. It is disquieting, however, that since parity was achieved the United States has been trying in every way to get the structure of the Soviet strategic forces revised so that it is made to approximate the American structure as much as possible. Demands of this kind have for many years blocked agreements within the context of the SALT process. Nor did Washington spare its efforts to influence the evolution of Soviet strategy and make the Soviet Union recognize the strategic principles advocated by the United States.

These efforts were not at all altruistic. If Soviet strategic forces became a mirror image of American ones, Washington believed, the United States could then expect to win considerable moral advantages thanks to its "technological superiority" and, accordingly, "greater dynamism" and "a gain in quality." Had the Soviet Union adopted the American strategic concepts, the United States would have faced at last the fairly "predictable" enemy much needed for a "rational" nuclear strategy. It is characteristic that American leaders see the main obstacle to the growth of the political effectiveness of their nuclear strategy in Moscow's refusal to agree that a nuclear conflict can somehow be limited.

For many years the Soviet Union has given a symmetrical response to American weapon systems, that is, it has produced and deployed similar weapons. Thanks to this, it has been able effectively to neutralize the political and psychological pressure of the United States. The United States is now trying to draw the Soviet Union into a new spiral of arms buildup: the quantitative limits set by the SALT treaties have been defiantly violated, a new generation of American offensive weapons is soon to appear, and work on the "star wars" programme - fraught with unprecedented dangers for international security - is proceeding rapidly.

Does this mean that the Soviet Union will have to develop weapon systems roughly the same as those the United States is going to deploy? Moscow is showing restraint and seeking to follow the principle of reasonable sufficiency. It is not producing weapons in excess of what is needed. The Soviet Union and its Warsaw Treaty allies, the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization stated at its Berlin meeting, intend to keep strictly within the limits of sufficiency for defence, and repulsing possible aggression. The Soviet Union continues to observe the limits set by the SALT treaties. It will not copy the American "star wars" programme, but will give an asymmetric answer to it. Moreover, the Soviet Union has put forward a number of bold initiatives in the disarmament sphere, including a radical solution of the problem of medium-range missiles in Europe and of operational-tactical missiles.

Is not such restraint harmful at a time when most people are using old yardsticks in the evaluation of the strategic balance? Taking advantage of the gap between nuclear space realities and the traditional way of thinking, the United States could, indeed, succeed in creating the illusion of military superiority and thus acquire certain advantages.

Such a danger does, of course, exist. Today, too, some people may conclude that since the United States is deploying new offensive armament systems and preparing to launch weapons in outer space, this means it is ahead and will attain superiority.

The Soviet Union is now trying to find more than just the half measures that will to some extent reduce the level of confrontation. By refusing to follow the "generally accepted" logic of confrontation, it wants to thwart this logic and break the vicious circle of the arms race.

The manifest violation of the limits imposed by SALT by the United States was obviously intended to provoke the Soviet Union and force it to follow the American example. A similar measure by Moscow would provide further confirmation of the archaic stereotypes that admit of no quantitative "lag" from the rival, because this creates the illusion of superiority. But even if some were carried away by this illusion, the Soviet Union is showing by its restraint that old streotypes can be overcome, and demonstrating new thinking.

Washington is also trying in every possible way to draw the Soviet Union into the competition in the building of large-scale ABM systems with space-based elements. This desire is so strong that it has offered to share "star wars" technology with the Soviet Union and invited us to start creating and deploying our own systems of a similar kind.

Of course, all this is merely propaganda rhetoric designed to ascribe "noble" motives to the American position. Washington secretly hopes that Moscow will take the same course and try to copy SDI. For this will confirm the old notion that a new weapon can only be counterbalanced by the same type, since otherwise the rival may obtain an advantage.

In this case the United States will remain in its own element in the field of competition for the creation of new weapon systems, where it hopes again to rely on its "technological superiority." This explains why Washington reacted with irritation and disappointment to the Soviet Union's statement that it will give an effective but asymmetrical response to SDI.

The solution offered by Moscow for the problem of medium-range and operational-tactical missiles is another example of how it is destroying deeply entrenched stereotypes. The Soviet Union is prepared to scrap more weapons than the United States is expected to do. Traditional logic prompts that this is a big concession, a voluntary renunciation of a major political and psychological advantage. The point, however, is that Moscow has no intention of using its nuclear armaments as a means of pressure, but is trying to get rid of them.

Strange as it may seem, many in the West have reacted coolly to the Soviet initiative. Some people in the United States and the countries allied with it are arguing that some American missiles should after all be kept in Europe. This talk betrays the desire to retain nuclear weapons as a means of political and psychological pressure.

Discarding trite notions, the Soviet Union is even today noticeably shaking up the logic of traditional thinking. It is doubtful whether U.S. policy-makers seek to understand the imperatives of the new thinking. But sooner or later they will see that attempts to gain political dividends by means of armaments, psychologically "effective" but superfluous from the military point of view, by means of an endless upgrading of nuclear strategy, will be doomed increasingly to failure.

This will happen as more and more people begin to understand and bridge the gap between their own ideas and the realities of the nuclear space age. Of course, this will not come about of itself. An impulse to this difficult process could be given by the latest initiatives of the Soviet Union, which is guided by the principle of reasonable sufficiency and seeks to undermine the vicious logic of confrontation. This, however, requires time.

The principle of reasonable sufficiency, if the Soviet Union alone abides by it, will not help bring about a radical improvement in the world military and political situation in the near future. It takes two to tango, Americans say. The sooner Washington realizes this, the earlier it will be possible to apply the principle of reasonable sufficiency to achieve a truly radical staged reduction in nuclear weapons, all the way to their complete elimination.

What's new in Jiangsu Province

GRIGORY ARSLANOV

Our IL-18 left Peking from a military aerodrome, where transport planes and, recently, passenger airliners belonging to the Chinese Air Force, are now based. Having set up its own passenger airline company, the Air Force has thus started carrying civilian passengers as well.

The purpose of our flight was to see something of Jiangsu Province, which is often described as the jewel of Eastern China. The proximity of the sea, Taihu and Hongzehu, the country's two biggest freshwater lakes, fertile lands, good waterways, and, of course, the industriousness of the peasants, have turned the region into China's major economic area. As many as 62 million people live on an area of 100,000 sq.km. In spite of such a large population, Jiangsu not only feeds itself, but also provides the state with substantial quantities of grain, rice and oil-bearing plants.

Judging from our conversations with the people, unlike other parts of China, their province is not bent on introducing private enterprise. They are more interested in the planned aspect of a socialist economy.

In the countryside

While in most of China the family farming is widely practised, in Jiangsu, where agriculture is well developed, there seems to be no need, according to the local authorities, to resort to it, i.e., turn over land over a period of years to a single family. Collective farming is more common in the province. As the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fishery, He Kang, said, it is the economic foundation of the province's agriculture. What are the results?

Last year the province received from its total of 4.6 million hectares of cultivated land 33.4 million tons of grain, i.e., more than 0.5 tons per person resident in the province. The output of tea and fruit increased substantially, and poultry farming and fishing continued to progress.

The construction of so-called village factories that specialize chiefly in the output of goods required in agriculture has become widespread in the province. There are now about 70,000 of them with a fixed capital of 10,000 million yuan. They employ 6.2 million people, more than 30 per cent of the entire work force. Another advantage of these factories is that they make for more effective use of the surplus labour in rural areas.

Jiangsu leaders told us it would be wrong to say that agriculture in the province encounters no difficulties. There is, for example, the problem of production's dependence on purchasing prices. When purchasing prices for cotton fell sharply, for example, areas under that crop dwindled drastically. One peasant, Chen Yongjin, told us that while the production cost of grain was constantly increasing, the purchasing price remained low. According to him, the income from the sale of 1 ton of grain amounted only to 380 yuan, while the production cost was 290 yuan. Because of that, many farmers do not want to concentrate entirely on farming. It is mostly people over the age of 50 who till the land, while the younger generation either moves to the towns or is concentrated chiefly in the village factories.

In the cities

From time immemorial the men of Jiangsu have worked in the fields while the women, in the time left over from housekeeping, engaged in weaving.

Much has changed in recent years. The textile industry in the province has been equipped with the latest machines, not just Chinese-made, but also French and West German. Modern technology has been introduced and now goods with the label "Made in China" can successfully compete on world markets. The province's light industry produces more than 20,000 items, including world-famous embroidered silks, porcelain, lacquer work and clothing. China's textile industry is gradually beginning to offer a strong challenge to its traditional competitors - South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The

Mini-mowers used on small, family-cultivated plots.

TASS photo

main factor in this competition is cheapness of labour, and in that respect China has the edge.

The renovation of industrial enterprises' fixed capital, the modernization of craft workshops and the construction of new factories have helped develop the machine-building industry in Jiangsu. It now accounts for about 20 per cent of the province's gross industrial output. And it employs more than 2 million people. The pride of Jiangsu is the Changzhou factory which produces diesel engines.

An industry that has sprung up recently is electronics. The province already produces more than 1,000 types of electronic ware, including components for computers, various meters, space equipment and automated meteorological stations. The leaders of the province link the further development of this industry with more extensive cooperation with foreign companies, especially American ones. A short while ago a factory making electromagnetic tape for computers started production. It was built in the city of Wuxi as a joint Sino-American enterprise. There are also plans for a synthetic fibre factory using American technology.

The Chinese leadership's policy of livening up the economy and extending ties with the outside world is yielding some results. In 1986 the province earned 1.7 million dollars in profits from its exports. Today it has direct trade links with 130 countries. A short while ago a number of large factories were given the right to an independent outlet on to the world market. The province's authorities have approved 785 projects that will involve foreign capital.

Problems and solutions

As industry develops, the province is increasingly facing fuel and power problems. According to local economists, many factories are already working at less than full capacity. That naturally has its effect on wages. In the city of Nantong, for instance, normal industrial output needs twice as much electricity as it now receives. As one way out of this situation, the city authorities are trying to switch some of the factories to night work, but that gives rise to other difficulties - in transport and the service industry. The consumption of fuel and electricity rose sharply as a result of the construction of thousands of small village factories. Their comparatively low efficiency leads to a squandering of energy.

Another factor hindering Jiangsu's economic progress is the shortage of engineering and other technical staff. For instance, in the city of Changzhou, which ranks among the country's twenty biggest producers, engineers and technicians account for about 8 per cent of those employed in industry. And the greater part of these do not have a special technical education, but are the most intelligent workers transferred to engineer's or technician's jobs.

Jiangsu factory managers I had occasion to speak to noted that under the reform the independence of the factories had greatly increased, but that it was still necessary to give the individual manager the right to determine the size of his work force and the prices of the goods produced. In other words, though the factories themselves remain state enterprises, they should have complete financial and administrative independence.

In recent years the state has cut back considerably on taxes and deductions from the profits of big industrial enterprises. This has had some effect. But, as the Renmin ribao pointed out, it has not managed to resolve all the problems.

In the course of the reform, the volume of economically unjustified capital construction rose sharply. This meant the dissipation of funds and uneconomical use of raw and building materials. Now steps are being taken in the province to reduce capital investment and non-productive expenditure: last year investments were cut back by 107 million yuan.

The main task facing Jiangsu today, said the people we talked to, is that of enlivening the work of the big state enterprises.

In the past, noted Gu Sulian, the head of the Jiangsu provincial government, too much time was spent on unrealistic campaigns. Now all our efforts must be concentrated on production.

Peking

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In the spring of 1967 the situation in the Middle East was disquieting as never before. There were almost daily shellings and exchanges of rifle and machine-gun fire in the frontier areas of the Arab countries bordering on Israel. Every now and then Israeli planes would cross into the airspace of Arab states breaking the sound barrier over their cities and villages in a defiant show of readiness at any moment to overstep the line between a volatile peace and impending war.

In the language of U.N. observers posted on the borders, those were "incidents."

The Israelis provoked another such incident on the Syrian Golan Heights on the morning of April 7. They sent several tractors under tank escort to cultivate land in a "demilitarized zone" north of Lake Tiberias. The resulting shoot-out soon escalated into a veritable battle involving artillery and armoured cars. Israeli aircraft strafed the positions of Syrian troops on the Golan Heights. A dogfight then broke out over Damascus. A group of correspondents accredited to Syria, including the present writer, were allowed to visit the area of the Golan Heights.

I remember the cascades of the river Banias at the foot of a green hill. For centuries the water has been polishing the remains of ancient Roman columns that once fell into the river down a precipitous bank. The hill-top offered a scenic view of the biblical land around the Sea of Galilee, which was formerly always associated with peace and calm. It was impossible to believe that it had become a battlefield. An officer from the group of U.N. observers, who had joined us, seemed to have read our minds as he pointed to a verdant hillock, and said there had been another incident there two days before.

"How often are there clashes here?" one of my colleagues asked.

"Several times a week. All in all, the armistice has been violated at least 6,900 times," the officer replied.

Seeing the surprise in our eyes, he added, "You can work it out for yourselves if you add up the days since the establishment of the state of Israel was proclaimed on May 14, 1948. That is, of course, if you allow only one incident a day. In fact, however, they have been much more frequent than that."

Subsequent developments introduced significant changes to that method of reckoning, as on June 5, 1967, Tel Aviv started another Israeli-Arab war. It didn't last for six days, as is still claimed in Israel and the West. The "six-day" war is a myth. Today, twenty years later, the June war seems to have been just a six-day prelude to Tel Aviv's perennial aggression against the Arab countries.

Six days and 20 tragic years

LEONID MEDVEDKO

My notes from the time speak of seventh, eighth and subsequent days of the aggression: after the first six days the feeling that the war had ended was present neither in Syria or Lebanon (even though that country had not fought against Israel), or in Egypt, let alone Jordan.

I remember an endless stream of refugees with their scanty belongings crossing the Jordan to the east bank over a makeshift wooden foot-bridge near the old bridge that had been destroyed. Many were carrying or leading small, crying children. Those children are now adults, but they have not known a real home to this day. Their lives have been spent in numerous refugee camps. Since then two generations of Palestinians have grown up in camps.

By driving the Palestinians out, the Zionists' intention was to correct what they see as the "six-day" war's mistake of having brought them "territorial gains but not a demographic victory." A considerable proportion of the Arabs stayed on in their Israeli-occupied lands, but over the following 20 years the invaders have in some measure been able to "rectify the mistake." As many as over half the Palestinian people now live outside their homeland. But Tel Aviv has still been unable fully to achieve its objectives.

Followed several years later by Israel's formal annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and its active "development" of captured Arab lands on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip, the June war for this reason occupies a special place in the history of the situation in the Middle East and the evolution of the Palestinian problem itself. The period since the war has been marked not only by demographic changes in that problem but also by a dramatically new phase in the Arab, and with it the Palestinian, liberation movement. The Zionists wanted to make the Palestinians a people in exile but have made them a people under arms. It is since the June war that the Palestinian resistance movement has begun to gather momentum, gaining in both scale and strength.

Israel has fallen short of the principal goals of its June 1967 aggression, both those it declared for all to hear and those it preferred to keep to itself. Tel Aviv described the war as a "preemptive measure to ensure Israel's security." Washington, which gave the green light for that act of aggression, said it too was motivated by a desire for "security" and a "stable peace" in the Middle East. Those assertions, however, deluded nobody. The violence met with a rebuff. The "lightning" war was a Pyrrhic victory for Israel. It lost more than 7,000 men in dead and wounded. But the military losses were nothing compared with the moral and political ones.

Before the whole world Israel showed itself as an aggressor. Many of those in the Americas, Western Europe and Africa who had hitherto sympathized with it turned away from it after the war. Moreover, Israel has failed to gain peace and security by seizing Arab territories and extending its frontiers further. Those new "borders" have not even come to mark the line of a truce, becoming instead the line of virtually incessant fighting. The act of aggression has in many respects led to results directly opposite to the ones sought by those who masterminded and carried it through.

The Soviet Union, which has resolutely sided with the Arabs and consistently backs their just struggle, has seen its prestige in the Middle East grow substantially. Imperialist powers, particularly the United States, have, by contrast, found their image in the Arab world impaired. The two diametrically opposite approaches to a Middle Eastern settlement manifested themselves in various ways both during and after the June 1967 war.

Not only progressive Arab figures but also the leaders of pro-Western Middle Eastern states have repeatedly pointed to the important role of Soviet assistance and support in the effort to do away with the aftermath of the Israeli aggression. Many Western military historians have admitted in their books that the armed forces of Egypt and Syria were almost fully equipped with Soviet military hardware, which was superior to the Israeli army's in both numbers and quality. Whereas in June 1967 the Arabs failed to use those arms efficiently enough, the next war, in October 1973, vividly demonstrated both the superior quality of those weapons and the fighting abilities of the Arab armies.

Israel, which celebrated a lightning victory in June 1967, had to part with the victor's laurels in October 1973. It has since become obvious that the age of "blitzkriegs" is a thing of the past.

Today, twenty years after the June 1967 war, Israel's rulers boast that their country has become a U.S. ally of at least the importance of any of the NATO members. This does not give Israel, however, either a secure future or genuine independence. The two goals will remain unattainable so long as it continues to threaten the independence and security of its Arab neighbours.

The ruins of the Egyptian town of Ismailia. 1967.

Where all 360 meridians meet

A monologue about the Arctic explorer Arthur Chilingarov

On May 25 at 15:59 Moscow time the nuclear-powered icebreaker Sibir, whose journey to the top of the planet had been followed by the entire country, reached the geographical point of the North Pole. The invisible axis around which the Earth rotates passed through the ship - all 360 meridians meeting under it. One of the many aims of the Arctic expedition, unrivalled in the history of Arctic exploration, had been achieved. Celebrating the occasion with the rest of the team was a tall bearded man, the expedition's leader Arthur Chilingarov. Like the rest - hydrologists, oceanographers, geophysicists, pilots and seamen - he flung his fur hat high towards the pale-blue skies and made "a round-the-world" tour around the flag mast. This story is about him.

When people talk about our country, which occupies a sixth of the Earth's land surface,I wonder if anyone can estimate the share of the world's cold that has fallen to us? Or our share of the world's ice, snow, wind and undeveloped expanses? One cannot imagine Soviet people and their national character without their ability to stand up to all this and overcome it. I think this will always be a page in the annals of our history: the reflection of the northern lights on the side of a snowmobile, frosted beards on young faces, and an end to endless silence as Soviet people conquer the Arctic.

The conquest of the Arctic; its development. Ordinary words, simple words. Yet it should be remembered that the Soviet Arctic coastline alone stretches for many thousands of kilometres. The boundless spaces within the Arctic circle which could comfortably fit in all of Europe, the tundra with its permafrost - they, too, are part of the North. The rich mineral resources, the wealth of its rivers and of the ocean shelf also belong to the North. Just like the six months' long Arctic cold and dark.

Nor should one forget the Antarctic - also a polar region.

....On the eve of the New Year, when summer was at its height in the Antarctic, a group of people walking single-file and several heavy vehicles moved in the direction of Amery Glacier. It was headed by an all-purpose vehicle followed by a heavy vehicle with thick tyres. Then came a tall man in a fur jacket and boots.

The weather, in his opinion, was terrible: the sun shone brightly and the temperature was a mere 15 degrees below zero, the ice underfoot was brittle and hummocked. Practically all the time somewhere in the vicinity one could hear ice cracking and see the edges gleaming in the sun. Dreadful weather.

The caravan advanced slowly, at moments, almost at a snail's pace, as avoiding cracks required great caution. Especially as they were not travelling light, but were carrying materials and equipment for the camp five kilometres from the coast. They also had to carry logs and boards to build bridges.

The vehicle leading the way suddenly stopped. The leader of the expedition hurried up to it, followed by geophysicist Yuri Ivanov, and doctor Vladimir Garshenin. Ahead lay a big crack - about five metres wide. He lay down on the ice and looked down. An abyss. In the morning there had been no crack....

"Ropes and clamps," he ordered. "We'll have to rope the logs together."

The first vehicle crossed the bridge. The second vehicle also crossed safely, as did the prefabricated houses on sleds, and the crates containing the equipment. But the bridge no longer looked the same - the top layer had been churned up and the lower one sagged. When Lev Gerasimov got his bulldozer onto the bridge, the logs began to slither apart and the bulldozer tipped forward.

The driver looked out of his window: the caterpillar tyres were skidding.

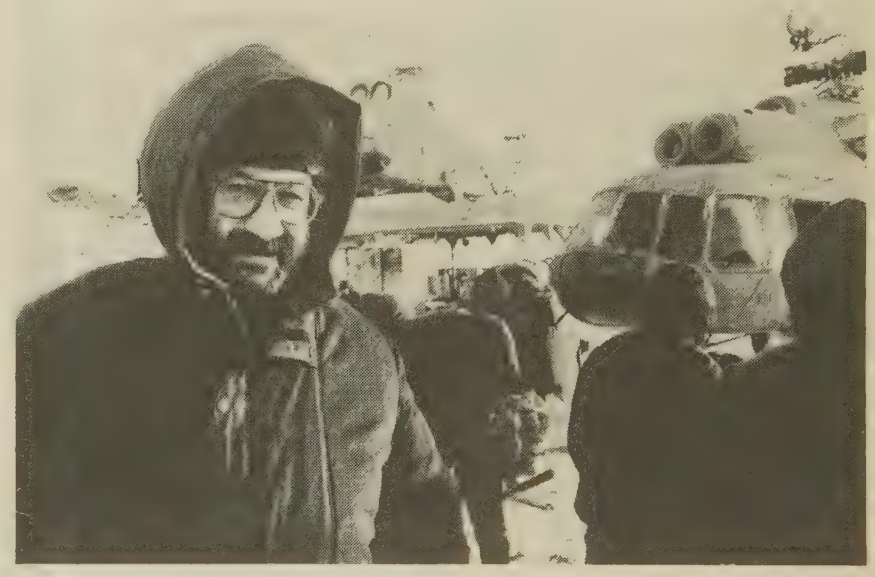
"Jump! Leave your machine," the leader shouted.

Gerasimov shook his head and dived back into the cabin. He accelerated, and the caterpillar tyres bit into the wood, tearing it to pieces.

His companions seemed transfixed. Then the leader made a 3-metre dart, grabbed the rope from the first vehicle, then jumped again and reached the bulldozer on the bridge. He had just managed to tie the rope when the front vehicle began to pull. Slowly, reluctantly the bulldozer started moving along the bridge, rising slightly, leaving disaster behind. It had barely made firm ground when the bridge collapsed and disappeared into the chasm....

Traditionally Arctic explorers, those who went to the heart of the Arctic, to the very Pole, were chosen only from experienced people, many times tried and tested. That tradition goes back to the days of Nansen, and was reinforced in Papanin's day.

But in 1959 Soviet aircraft carried to the Pole a group of young lads, just out of college. They were members of the world's first youth Polar drifting research station, North Pole-8. It completed its tour of duty well, confirming with each radiomessage and every day of its drift that the young can work in the Arctic. And when ten years later, the Leningrad Komsomol suggested marking the cente-



Arthur Chilingarov.
Photo by A. Kochetkov

nary of Lenin's birth by sending a youth team to a Polar drifting research station, there was no lack of candidates. The only difficulty was choosing the leader.

The choice fell on Arthur Chilingarov, who was as yet unfamiliar with conditions on a drifting ice-floe.

Boys often dream of going to sea when they grow up. This dream was shared by Arthur Chilingarov as a boy in Leningrad - his dream was of the Arctic where huge icebergs drift lazily. His favourite books were about Amundsen and the Papanin quartet, his favourite hero was Malmgren, who gave his own life to save the lives of his comrades.

A small hunting settlement lies frozen at the Arctic coast. A ship carrying food has to be dispatched there. It's the hydrologist's job to chart its course so that the ice doesn't bar its way and can be broken if encountered.

It was in Tiksi that he came fully to understand the true meaning of such ordinary concepts as: determine, prepare and make an exhaustive study of the situation. The meaning of this was brought home by days of flying over ice-floes, melted snow in his mug for breakfast and footwear reduced to tatters from walking on ice.

He was appointed leader of the North Pole-19 expedition. Perhaps "appointed" is not quite the right word. The idea of such a youth expedition originated with the Komsomol committee of the Arctic and Antarctic Scientific Research Institute. And at that time Chilingarov was its secretary (after his return from Tiksi). It was at the end of the sixties when the first outlines of today's work in the North were just being traced, and the thousands of people who work there today were growing up: geologists and builders of nuclear power stations, hydrologists and the winterers, scientists and pilots.

Alexei Treshnikov, who was at that time director of the Arctic and Antarctic Institute, said, "We, the institute's leadership, decided to spare the young specialists and chose an "easy" ice floe. It was actually a flat iceberg, about 30 metres thick... The thickness of the ice floes on which most such expeditions had been set up in the past was usually 3-4 metres. We thought their ice island would serve as a sound foundation, and would not be likely to crack."

On November 7, 1969, the most northern local Komsomol organization began work on a flat, reliable iceberg.

When aircraft carrying mail landed on the ice floe the pilots were always amazed by the atmosphere that reigned on North Pole-19. Every evening in the club impromptu concerts were arranged, or other forms of entertainment such as the defence of a thesis by mechanic Anatoly Bykov, who chose as his subject "Mechanical-heating arrangements on ice floes in the Northern Hemisphere and their effect on global processes in the ocean and atmosphere." A spoof, of course.

The pilots laughed: Cranks!

But the "cranks" had prepared heavy folders for them filled with reports and papers on their observations and experiments. Laugh and joke they did, but the youngsters chosen by Chilingarov were doing serious scientific work.

The care with which top scientists had chosen a reliable iceberg for the youngsters proved in vain. The Arctic has its own ways. Disaster struck in the middle of the Polar night. The ice island hit underwater cliffs and began to break up. The ice under the houses and tents shuddered. The section of the iceberg carrying the station was cut off. By the dim light of their torches the young people saw one of the chipped-off parts turn over heavily, carrying with it the equipment tent. Ahead of them on the horizon was a moving range of hummocks sweeping everything away in its path....

All eyes of the expedition members huddled together on the swaying iceberg were on Chilingarov. But Arthur seemed to be taking a long time, an incredibly long time trying to light his cigarette. It refused to light and he threw it away with regret. Only then did he tell the radio operator to report back to the mainland that the iceberg had cracked. Report cracking, not disaster. The doctor was instructed to pack medicines and food. He himself grabbed the corrugated iron crate nearest to him and began pulling it away from the crack. He turned to Eduard Sarukhanyan, "Give me a hand, can't you see it's too much for me," he joked.

Meanwhile on the mainland rescue planes were taking off. But the ridge of hummocks, capable of breaking the expedition's strongest house as if it were built of matches, was approaching more quickly. Looking into the wall of ice approaching them, one of the members remarked, "When you've got the strength, brains don't matter."

Arthur breathed a sigh of relief. The boys were taking it well.

He gave instructions to prepare emergency rucksacks with warm clothing and put on their lifebelts.

The wall of ice stopped just three metres short of their camp. The next day the inhabitants were evacuated. But not to the mainland. Arthur and the other members of the expedition insisted that they be moved to the part of the iceberg that had survived. Their Polar drift continued.

Perhaps it was then, almost 18 years ago, that somebody remarked that Chilingarov was made for emergencies. (That view was confirmed during the expedition he headed to the Antarctic to save the vessel Somov.) Yet I well remember that Arthur himself did not share this view.

I remember, because that was when I first got to know him, and wrote about him for the paper. Of course, at that time I never imagined I was writing about a future Hero of the Soviet Union, one of the most eminent Arctic explorers and leader of the expedition that is today followed so breathlessly by the whole educated world:

"Arthur had just returned from the Antarctic, and in response to my usual question 'what next?' he replied that it was time to give up his wanderings; he was over thirty, he would part with his beard and get down to research - he had a couple of ideas.

"He shook my hand in parting. Looking through the window I saw his light jacket being swallowed up in the Leningrad drizzle, but I still stood at the window thinking about Chilingarov. Would he really settle down within four walls to a quiet orderly life? I don't know what life holds in store for him. But of one thing I'm certain: those 'couple of ideas' he mentioned probably are indicative of a new goal. I'm certain that he won't settle for a quiet life."

There was no direct communication with the Sibir - only through Murmansk and by cable. At our request Pravda's special correspondent on board the icebreaker V. Chertkov asked the leader of the expedition, deputy chairman of the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Hydrometeorology and Control of Natural Environment Arthur Chilingarov, to comment on the first results of the voyage:

"On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the heroic Papanin expedition North Pole-1, we took on board the members of the North Pole-27 expedition. With our help North Pole-28 has started operating. A vast programme of research is being tackled by the expedition on board the Sibir: scientists from a number of academic institutes, from my Committee, the ministry of the navy, the ministry of the power industry, and the Council of Ministers' geodesy and cartography department. The comprehensive exploration of the environment around the North Pole takes in everything from the ice surface to the ionosphere; the ocean bed is being sounded, and samples of the water taken, and a new map of Franz Jozef Land is being compiled. There is a great deal to be done. I should like to note that the Soviet Union has for 50 years been committed to research in the Arctic. It's true that passive methods predominated in the past - using drifting research stations (although in this field too noticeable progress has been made: on the North Pole-28 station, a computerized system of data-gathering was introduced for the first time). The Sibir's voyage marks a qualitatively new stage. Today it is no longer one man against Nature. The scientific and operative conditions provided for our voyage show that we can reach any point in the Arctic Ocean at any time of year."

A few days ago the icebreaker's radio operator received a message from the government - the expedition was warmly congratulated by Mikhail Gorbachev on having inscribed a new page in the annals of the exploration of the Arctic.

Having visited the North Pole, the Sibir has now set its course for the Laptev Sea.

YURI SHEVCHENKO

Linnas for death

A man who thought he would never have to see the scene of his crimes again is being held in Tallinn prison. He is nazi war criminal Karl Linnas.

In 1961 the Soviet Union demanded that the United States extradite Karl Linnas, then residing there. He was to face trial for perpetrating mass murder in the territory of Estonia. The Soviet Union's demand was ignored. In 1962 Linnas was tried in absentia in Tartu and sentenced to death for his grievous crimes against humanity. But Washington again refused to extradite the butcher. It was only in 1980-81 that American jurists visited Estonia and attended the examination of witnesses. The U.S. court started proceedings on the case of Karl Linnas' deportation. He was stripped of his U.S. citizenship in July 1981. Then there were long-drawn-out appeals, new hearings, more than ten in all. Meanwhile the U.S. Department of Justice was unhurriedly looking for a country that would give asylum to the criminal. Some thirty governments refused the dubious honour. Finally last April, Linnas was taken in custody to John Kennedy international airport...

Tallinn journalist Mark Levin describes Linnas' past.

The camp was set up in Tartu in August 1941. The area that had been the Exhibition Square was fenced off with barbed wire. Sentries were posted.

The German command promptly took notice of Karl Linnas. He was fluent in the language of the Reich, had military bearing (he had attended a military academy in capitalist Estonia and become an ensign), and he voluntarily applied for work at the camp. Moreover, he was an excellent marksman. And he hated Soviet power.

Gratitude for his zeal was not long in coming. Sergeant major Fritz Hissen, the camp's German superintendent, would take him along to the storehouse where they would pick out the best things from among the prisoners' belongings. Nor was he passed over when promotions were made. So the former ensign now sported a lieutenant's shoulder straps.

Linnas as chief of the camp always carried a riding crop (he had been a keen horseman in the past). But now he did not use it to lash horses. His riding crop descended on people's backs and faces. Sometimes he used a knout instead. And he never appeared in the camp without an automatic pistol. He liked to shoot at live targets. He kept track of how many people he had ordered to be executed, how many he had shot himself, and how many just wounded he had finished off. Men and women, old people and children fell into an anti-tank ditch. And those who were merely wounded were given their quietus by the lieutenant. Witnesses recall that at each shot Linnas nodded as if mentally totting up his score in corpses.

Excerpts from the protocol of a meeting of judicial board for criminal offences of the Supreme Court of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic. 1962.

Public Prosecutor:

"Did you witness mass executions of the Soviet people?"

Witness Olav Karikosk:

"Once Linnas ordered me to take a seat in the same car as himself. I tried to refuse, but he insisted. I couldn't disobey him. I saw a group of Jewish women being forced into a bus. Their clothes were being torn from them. There were elderly women and little girls among them. All of them were bound with the same rope. The car in which I was sitting next to Linnas and Hissen was following the bus. Then the bus stopped at a ditch and the doomed women were dragged out of it. Some of them were naked. Drunken guards stripped them of their clothing in the bus. I knew a brother of one of the women.... Guard Udo Kupper raped a woman in the bus right before the eyes of everybody present."

Public Prosecutor:

"Many years have passed since the time when Linnas was chief of the Tartu death camp. Would you recognize him now?"

Karikosk:

"Linnas meant death. It is not to be forgotten. I'd recognize him at once."

Linnas' classmate Arnold Jaska was a prisoner in the camp. They had been neighbours, gone to school together and later both entered the university. And now Lieutenant Karl Linnas was serving in the nazi concentration camp, while fighter of a volunteer battalion Arnold Jaska was prisoner No. 380...

In the winter of 1944 the nazis started driving prisoners to the area of Lemmatsi Village to build a large oven. The chimney was not tall, and dense black smoke hung low over the field. The wind carried the smell of burning to the city and to the area where the prisoners were kept behind a barbed-wire fence as the nazis burned the bodies of Soviet people they had murdered, and destroyed the evidence of their crimes. Twelve thousand people,

Linnas being taken to the plane that would fly him to the scene of his crimes.

From Newsweek (U.S.)

almost a tenth of those killed by the nazis and their henchmen in Estonia, died in Tartu concentration camp. No less than 2,000 people were executed either on Karl Linnas' orders or by him personally.

Arnold Jaska escaped from the concentration camp in August 1944. Eleven people were planning to escape and considering ways of doing so. One cannot get far in a prisoner's uniform. Arnold ordered his comrades to form a column and commanded in German: "Forward to work, march!"

And eleven people in tattered clothes marched to freedom before the eyes of all the inhabitants of the city, the police, and members of the SD and the Gestapo.

At about the same time officer of detachment 41-E of the SS forces Karl Linnas fled from the nazi army he had once been so eager to join. He tore off his shoulder straps, removed the emblem from his service cap, and then discarded the cap itself. It would be naive to think he was fleeing from his conscience, and the memory of the hundreds upon hundreds of people he had murdered. He was fleeing from the living, such as Jaska, who had seen and remembered everything, and would never forgive him.

He lived fairly comfortably in the F.R.G. for over six years. But West German anti-fascists had him expelled from the country.

Karl Linnas went to live in the U.S. On entering the country in 1951 he told the immigration authorities that he was only a student during the second world war and had had no part in the fighting. He was granted an entrance visa, and then in 1959 he was naturalized. He found a job as a land surveyor. And when, dressed as Santa Claus, he delivered Christmas presents to children in the neighbourhood, no one would have thought him capable of shooting children's heads without once missing his target.

With the passage of time Linnas even started boasting about his exploits in Tartu...

Arnold Jaska could not forget either the anti-tank ditch filled with bodies or the camp behind the barbed-wire fence. He remembered everything and testified at the trial where Linnas' case was being heard in the name of the republic he had betrayed, and the people he had been trying to exterminate.

Linnas has avoided retribution for 45 years. In solitary confinement in Tallinn prison, he now paces his cell, now sits down on his bunk and waits...

"Monstrous cruelty..."

Following a conversation with Linnas, the Public Prosecutor of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic Karl Kimmel answered questions from a New Times correspondent.

"You were public prosecutor when the death sentence was passed on Linnas at the trial in 1962. A quarter of a century has passed since then. What was your first memory on learning of Linnas' deportation from the United States?"

"I remembered for ever the facts that came to light during the investigation. Never before have I dealt with instances of such monstrous cruelty as that manifested by Linnas and his henchmen. They killed babies, and drove knives into pregnant women."

"You have visited Linnas in his prison cell. You talked with him. May I ask you what the conversation was about?"

"I had to establish whether any new circumstances that were not known at the time when the sentence was passed had come to light. We wished to know how Linnas himself viewed his activities in Tartu concentration camp. But Linnas only kept saying he was not guilty."

"But not even American jurists who visited the U.S.S.R. in 1980 and 1981 to attend the re-examination of witnesses had any doubt about the guilt of the butcher of Tartu...."

"Moreover, in 1981 an American lawyer made a video-recording of everything the witnesses said. The recordings were then presented to the U.S. court, and the court recognized the documents as valid. I reminded Linnas of this and he said: 'The American lawyers have been swayed by the Estonian prosecutor.'"

"Don't you feel flattered?"

"I am not so naive. It is simply that Linnas had nothing to say that was to the point. I told him: It was not you who passed the sentences; this was a task for the special division, but it was you and your henchmen who staged the mass executions, and committed rape and murder. This has been proved."

"Did he say anything to this?"

"No. He just smirked. And then he said he wished all the weapons in the world could be destroyed. Some pacifist. 'I was never an executioner,' he said. And he gave me a look such that I immediately realized how he would have dealt with me had he got hold of me in Tartu camp."

"And how did he behave in prison?"

"At first he was arrogant. He did not believe he could be sentenced to capital punishment. But when he was told what his real situation was, he became less haughty. It is obivous that he dreads death."

In the U.S.S.R. Public Prosecutor's Office in Moscow our correspondent met with senior legal adviser Natalya Kolesnikova.

"First of all," she said, "I must note that bringing to trial persons who took part in mass executions and committed grievous crimes against humanity is not only a moral duty but also a legal obligation of states. There exist a number of international documents, the most important of which is the Moscow declaration of October 30, 1943, which was signed by the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition. The declaration binds countries to extradite war criminals to the countries where they committed their atrocities. This principle was applied to Linnas. True, his extradition was delayed for 26 years...."

"Former White House communications chief Patrick Buchanan asserted that the Estonian witnesses were sham ones, and that the nazis did not murder 12,000 people in Tartu... Newsweek magazine wrote in a recent issue that even U.S. Attorney-General Edwin Meese had delayed Linnas' extradition and tried to persuade the Panamanian authorities to give asylum to the butcher of Tartu - anything at all to prevent his deportation to the U.S.S.R. It is known that Linnas' deportation had been long delayed by juridical wrangling, and endless appeals. Was that fair?"

"Taking advantage of such delays, many criminals lived in the United States to the end of their days. Some of them tried to hide. I would like to hope that proceedings in U.S. courts of justice for stripping war criminals of citizenship and then deporting them from the U.S. will be considerably simplified."

"Statements are now appearing in the Western press to the effect that Linnas cannot expect a fair trial in the U.S.S.R., so his deportation to the Soviet Union is morally unjustified....'"

"The Soviet Constitution says that all citizens are equal before the law. The law gives Linnas the right to appeal against a sentence and ask for pardon. Linnas has availed himself of this right. He has been given the services of a lawyer. All his requests are being thoroughly considered. The final verdict on the case will be given by the Supreme Court of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic. Just retribution is unavoidable. This is the principle of the Nuremberg trial. And this principle must be observed to this day, whether with regard to the butcher of Tartu Linnas or the butcher of Lyons Klaus Barbie, the inevitable outcome of whose trial is now awaited by the whole world...."

The dagger a mere adornment nowadays

DMITRY ZGERSKY and SAMANDAR KALANDAROV

The ascent to the uppermost terrace of the palace that formerly belonged to the Imam of Yemen was not easy. First we walked up a stony road to a steep cliff. This was followed by a long flight of steps. The palace was designed as an impregnable fortress: a stone tower on an isolated peak. Within there are storehouses. Food stocks to last the inhabitants through a siege were formerly kept there. But the most striking thing is an artesian well inside the palace. It is said to be 500 metres deep.

View from the Imam's palace

The terrace offers a magnificent panorama of the green Dhahr valley, with picturesque villages to the very horizon, and far-off mountain ridges. These are the lands of the Hammad tribe.

"Take a look down there," said Abdurruhman Shabibi, an official of the Foreign Ministry of the Yemen Arab Republic, who accompanied us on the tour. "This was the summer residence of the Imam. There was a fountain on the verandah, and a pool with fishes. A dramatic incident occurred on the verandah in distant times.

"One of the Imams was incurably ill. One rainy day, when he was suffering from an attack of his malady, he was visited by his vassal sheikh. The Imam brushed him aside as if to say: 'Leave me alone. I am indisposed.' But he did it clumsily and the guest slipped and fell. It looked as if the guest had been swept off his feet by a blow. It was a monstrous insult. The sheikh left the Imam's residence at once. He called his fellow villagers to arms, returned to the palace, killed the Imam, severed his head and dropped it down the cliff. The Imam's widow, mad with grief, rushed to summon people from other villages to attack the sheikh to avenge her dead husband. They attacked the sheikh's village and killed all the adult males. The dead were buried in a field, which was then ploughed by black buffalos. Since that time Hammad tribesmen have never owned black buffalos. That is how traditions start...."

That a battle had been fought within one tribe is something out of the ordinary. But perhaps no historian could count the number of intertribal clashes in Yemen.

It would be good if it could be said: "And then, after the revolution...." But no. Peace was not established in the Yemen Arab Republic immediately after the anti-royalist revolution of 1962. Part of the tribes supported the republicans, while others continued to rally behind the deposed monarch, Imam el-Badr. There were clashes within both camps. The 1974 coup did not lead to peace either. It was in an atmosphere of revolts and tribal strife that 36-year-old colonel Ali Abdullah Saleh was elected president of the republic in 1978. He was re-elected in 1983 and holds the office of president to this day.

The president assumed leadership of a country in which at least 80 per cent of the population regard themselves less as citizens of the republic than as members of their tribe.

Another tradition

One is at first shocked to see that passersby in the streets of the Yemeni capital, Sana, are armed. But then one gets accustomed to the sight of a broad, curved jambia dagger in a wide embroidered belt. Typical Yemeni male attire consists of a red and white checkered head-dress, a shirt, a jacket, a short checkered skirt, or sometimes a white floor-length one, a broad belt and a dagger. Rich men dress in much the same manner. Incidentally, ostentation is not characteristic of Yemenis. After office hours, employees of government institutions change out of European suits, collars and ties, into Yemeni costume complete with jambia.

In the Saba publishing complex we saw an editor operating a visual display unit. He wore national dress with a dagger. A girl in a yashmak was sitting at the VDU next to him.

People armed with pistols, carbines, or submachine guns, as well as daggers, were to be seen strolling in the streets of Sana in recent times. Now one has to deposit arms in a special store upon arriving in the capital. When leaving the city, they are returned.

We stopped at a filling station in Marib district. A worker in national costume was operating the pumps. He wore cartridge belts over his shoulders and was armed with a revolver, a dagger and a submachine gun, while his workmate was unarmed.

"Why is it that you are armed, while your colleague isn't?" we asked.

Sana's old town is a preserve of traditional national architecture.

How a jambia is worn.
From National Geographic (U.S.)

The worker burst out laughing and said: "I am a highlander, and he is from the valley, where they think carrying arms is vanity."

Indeed,travelling through the country, we saw peasants armed to the teeth and then whole villages where nobody carried arms, particularly on the coastal lowlands.

"People bear arms as adornment now," Abdurruhman Shabibi said.

And we recalled his remarks about the origin of traditions and the sad story of the black buffalos. And there is another tradition, bearing arms.

Peace above all

Our small delegation from the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee was visiting the Yemen Arab Republic at the invitation of the country's Council of Peace and Solidarity. Our impression of the country and its people built up gradually from everything we saw and from numerous meetings and conversations.

"To achieve peace and stability was our main objective. Problems of development can hardly be tackled in earnest without this," we were told by the executive secretary of the Standing Committee of the General People's Congress, Ahmed al-Asbahi. "The General People's Congress was set up in 1982. It consisted of 1,000 members. The National Charter was adopted. This was preceded by years of debate and referendums. The General People's Congress was expanded later. It now consists of 24,000 members. It is our people's parliament in which all the tribes are represented."

In Taiz, Yemen's second most important city, the governor of the province Mohsen el-Yusfi told us that besides parliament, stability is guaranteed by the security forces and the army. Mohsen el-Yusfi is a military man himself, as are most governors of provinces.

Late in the evening, when the bustle subsides in cities, the military patrol street crossings. Occasional cars are stopped at checkpoints, documents are examined, and some cars are, it seems, searched. All this convinced us above all of the fact that the Yemeni leadership is interested in peace and stability more than anything else and is doing everything in its power to guarantee a state of normality.

Busy people

There is a striking view at night from the verandah of the Marib Hotel in Taiz.The streets were ablaze with lights from cars, shopwindows, neon signs. The mountain ridges that surround the city are not visible on a moonless night. Houses climb the hill slopes. The upper part of the city is almost 2,000 metres higher than the central part. To get there, one has to cover 18 kilometres. The hills are studded with lights which, beyond some imperceptible line, merge with the stars. It is a fantastic view.

"Does your city attract many tourists?" we asked the governor, who took a drive with us to the upper part of the city. Mohsen el-Yusfi spoke briefly of tourism. "Yes, indeed," he said, "more and more peope are coming here from all over the world. There are hotels here and many more are being built. The exotic view is not the only attraction. We have a unique climate here. The temperature in winter and summer is actually the same, around 20 degrees Centigrade. Where else is the climate so constant? But I must say that we are not particularly concerned about tourists. We want above all to provide every comfort for the people of the city. You have seen the scale of construction. We have all modern conveniences. Look at those houses on the top of the hill. They have running water, sewage systems, electricity, and TV canals. We plan to lay out new parks and boulevards and more sports grounds, and to build more swimming pools."

"But there is no water here," we said. "There are no rivers in your country at all."

"All the water is drawn from artesian wells. And water is abundant. Rains are frequent," he answered.

"And what about electricity?" we asked.

"We have a power station, but it has been shut down. It is meant for use in an emergency. And we receive electricity from Hodeidah. There is a large thermal power station there."

We met people like Mohsen el-Yusfi in other places, too. For instance, we met Dirhem Nuaman, graduate of a Soviet higher educational establishment, and governor of Marib Province, which is developing very fast indeed.

Desert retreats

Marib Province is remarkable. First an oil refinery sprang up in the desert. Then the construction of a city was started. Its contours are already visible. Some houses in the national Yemeni style have been completed and gladden the eye with the colourful mosaics of their arched windows, but most buildings are still under construction or are just being laid out. But wherever a ground floor is completed, there is a shop.

Workers were laying the bricks of the first floor, and in a shop on the ground floor there was a brisk trade in everything from flat bread to video-recorders. The shop is well placed. Nearby, a hotel is ready for visitors. Governor Dirhem Nuaman, dressed in a turban, a long white robe, with a revolver and a dagger, met us in the lounge of the hotel.

"Welcome," he said in Russian. "Do you wish to have a shower and a rest? The suites are ready. I shall expect you for dinner in half an hour."

"You see what happens, comrades," he said enthusiastically at dinner, "the town does not yet exist, but there are many people who wish to live in it. The place has been well chosen. Though this is desert, there are many sights in the area. Have you seen the ancient Marib dam and the new one? There are no rivers, but there is a man-made sea. We shall start irrigating the desert and the area will turn into a granary. Nearby is the ancient city where, legend has it, the throne of the Queen of Sheba was situated. Archaeologists have already unearthed temples that were buried by the sands. Tourists are beginning to come. Come back in a few years and the desert will look different...."

Construction sites are, perhaps, the most characteristic feature of North Yemen.

The port of Hodeidah, only a short while ago an insignificant village, is now a city with broad boulevards, hotels and banks.

The problem of the city's appearance was mentioned in conversation in the capital, Sana. A steel-and-glass skyscraper was built for certain airlines and it was obvious that it spoiled the look of the city. The Minister of Municipalities and Housing, Ahmad Luqman, and the vice-governor of Sana, Hamdi el-Suneidar, told us that since then the authorities have been more careful. This is now the domain of local designers and architects. It has been decided that all structures built in Sana should have the imprint of the traditional Yemeni style.

Problems and prospects

The Yemen Arab Republic is classed as one of the 25 least developed countries in reference books and encyclopedias of recent years. The average per capita income ranges from 430 to 470 dollars a year. Industry has not yet been much developed. Cultivated land takes up 1.5 million hectares, 80 per cent of which are private property. Sharecropping is widespread. More than half the peasants have plots of under one hectare. It is not easy to effect an agrarian reform in North Yemen, with its patriarchal tribal way of life. But the government is doing everything to encourage the establishment of cooperative societies.

Cultivation of the famous Mocha coffee is diminishing. Strange as it may seem, Yemenis are indifferent to coffee. Qahwa, a brew from coffee husks, is a usual refreshment. While coffee plantations are dwindling, larger areas are being planted with kat shrubs. Chewing kat leaves is a Yemeni custom.

In Sana restaurants there are saloons where the bitter leaves, which resemble tea leaves, are chewed. Kat is regarded as a semi-narcotic. But its effects are apparently overestimated. They are no greater than those of strong tea. Drivers never set out on long-distance runs without taking a supply of kat leaves to chew to prevent them from dozing off as they negotiate the innumerable hairpin bends.

Coffee-growing is naturally far more profitable for the state from the viewpoint of cash receipts. But a considerable redistribution of funds amongst the population takes place as a result of private trade in bunches of kat leaves.

Recently, North Yemen had the good fortune to strike oil. It was discovered in Marib Province in 1984. Its commercial resources are now estimated at a billion tons. The state wishes to supplement receipts from oil with those from

agriculture, which is now developing at a rapid pace. When the Marib dam is completed this year, it will be possible to bring water to and cultivate 10,000 hectares of land, and transform desert areas into plantations and orchards. Mr Ahmed el-Asbani told us that the republic now meets 40 per cent of its needs in farm produce and is in the future to be self-suficient in this respect.

The network of highways has played an important role in the country's development. It is to be further extended. An end has in fact been put to the territorial disunity and isolation of tribes. Trade has become brisker. Most populated localities now have telephone communications.

Meeting the Prime Minister

The day before we were to leave Sana we were received by the Prime Minister of the Yemen Arab Republic, Abdel-Aziz Abdel-Ghani.

"We value highly and treasure our friendship with the Soviet Union," the Prime Minister said. "The Yemeni people are aware of the assistance the Soviet people have given and are giving our republic in its development. I shall confine myself to mentioning the cement mill in Bajil, the port in Hodeidah, the Taiz-Hodeidah highway, the Sardud agricultural facility, schools, hospitals, other projects built with Soviet assistance. Not to mention specialists in various fields trained in the Soviet Union".

"I would like to note that we have many things in common in our approach to international problems," Abdel-Aziz Abdel-Ghani went on. "For instance, we wholly support the Soviet Union's stand on a Middle East settlement. The same can be said of our attitude to the Iran-Iraq conflict. On a broader scale, our country fully supports the Soviet peace initiatives on disarmament and an end to nuclear testing. We Yemenis are well aware of the threat nuclear arms pose to the whole of humanity."

Relations between North and South Yemen were touched upon during the conversation. The Prime Minister said that a great number of refugees had arrived in the Yemen Arab Republic from the south after the events of January 1986. This naturally created problems with regard to their welfare and job placement.

"We have no other problems with our brothers from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen," Abdel-Aziz Abdel-Ghani said. "We are striving to do everything to eradicate the seeds of possible differences and conflicts." The Prime Minister added that it is a positive, favourable factor that the Soviet Union has friendly relations with both Yemeni states.

Points on the VAAP barometer

NIKOLAI CHETVERIKOV, chairman of the board of the U.S.S.R. Copyright Agency, generally known by its Russian acronym VAAP, answers questions from New Times.

The Soviet Union acceded to the Universal (Geneva) Copyright Convention 14 years ago, and VAAP was founded after that. Some people at the time questioned whether it was needed at all. They said that whereas previously we had translated any foreign author of our choosing and paid nothing for it, now the number of translations would be cut back so as to save hard currency.

I should say to that in the first place that VAAP was set up to help implement the Helsinki Final Act, which calls upon us, among other things, to endeavor "to ensure the full and effective application of the international agreements and conventions on copyright."

Then, this country not only pays out hard currency but also draws it itself as payment for books by Soviet authors printed abroad. Moreover, the commitment to ask for the author's consent to the publication of his work and pay him royalties is an essential element of international cultural cooperation. VAAP's mission is to make every effort to promote international cooperation in science and culture and help people in other countries to become acquainted with the best in Soviet literature, science and art.

Sceptics feared that concern to reward authors would limit the access of broad sections of the public to works of literature and art.

Guaranteeing authors' moral and fiscal rights, on the contrary, stimulates their creative activity and efforts to produce and disseminate intellectual values.

Copyright in this country is at the moment being updated. One of the problems concerns the use of literary and artistic works on radio and television. The law has fallen behind technological progress: radio and TV networks may at present include works previously used or published in their shows without asking the author for permission or paying him a fee. This is hardly fair.

Both Soviet and foreign authors often complain as well about the sums paid in royalties in this country.

VAAP and the unions of creative workers, together with the departments concerned, are now drafting proposals to change the rates of fees paid to authors for the publication of their works, their production on the stage, performance in concert, video and audio recordings, and broadcasting on radio and television. The rates were fixed 40 years ago and have never been revised, notwithstanding the significant changes that have taken place in wage and price scales. Moreover, the size of a fee is currently assessed on the basis of the volume of the book, without being dependent in any way on whether there is popular demand for it.

Does this mean that the new proposals are effectively aimed against levelling in pay and the flood of hack-work in our literature?

Precisely, and hence they are aimed at providing incentives for better product quality, if the term can be applied to literary and artistic work. I believe therefore that those who still doubt the need for and expediency of copyright protection do not have any real grounds for their scepticism.

I'll add for the sake of those who prefer statistics to words that over the past ten or eleven years 20,000 books by writers from 150 countries have been translated into different languages spoken in the Soviet Union and published here in a total of 1,500 million copies.

VAAP's sphere of responsibility, incidentally, is not confined to literature alone. The agency protects the rights of all whose business it is to add to our cultural heritage, including scientists, writers, composers, artists, sculptors, photographers, playwrights, journalists and architects. The possibility of offering similar protection for the rights of stage

directors and actors as well is now being examined.

Not infrequently VAAP also has to deal with copyright abuses both abroad and at home and see to it that authors' rights are restored.

Furthermore, we take part in round-table discussions, promotional displays of new Soviet literary works, music and art festivals, book fairs, and art exhibitions.

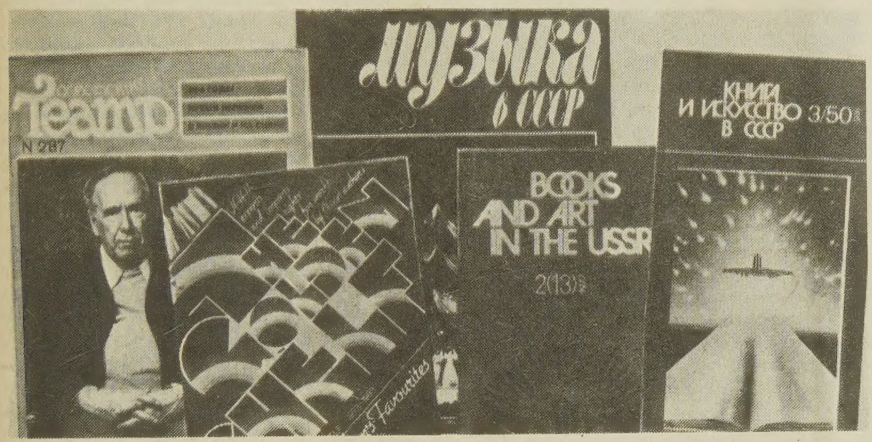
Talks with foreign partners (of whom we have over 1,000 in 70 countries) are held at VAAP almost every day. We also invite representatives of unions of creative workers, publishing houses and various periodicals to these meetings.

Soviet publishers decide themselves which books by foreign authors to bring out. What is the role played by VAAP in this process?

contracts? Since several leading prose writers, such as Sholokhov, Simonov, Trifonov, Abramov, Katayev and Tendryakov, have died in the last few years, has this affected the interest of foreign publishers in modern Soviet literature?

To enumerate the names of the Soviet authors popular abroad - scientists, fiction writers, publicists, dramatists, composers and artists - would take too long. The list is fairly extensive. It includes in effect the same authors whose names are, as they say, on everyone's lips in this country too. It should be noted at the same time that some foreign publishing houses are scaling down the publication of Soviet books of fiction and poetry. This is being done under the influence of factors it is quite simply unconscionable to introduce into cultural exchanges and contacts.

Don't you feel there is deliberate



A consultative one. But publishing houses and periodicals in this country, in our view, do not avail themselves fully enough of the information they can get at VAAP. We receive our information, in the meantime, at first hand - from visiting executives and experts of foreign firms and organizations and our own representatives abroad.

Judging from foreign comments, there is widespread interest abroad in the restructuring drive and the cultural renewal now under way in the Soviet Union. VAAP can be considered a kind of barometer that can register this interest in our life, literature, science and art. Just what is it showing at the moment?

A continuing upswing in public interest in the Soviet Union. This can be seen, in particular, from the fact that the collected speeches and articles of Mikhail Gorbachev are being issued in many countries. Foreign publishers are especially interested in books discussing problems involved in the current reform. Through us they place orders with Soviet authors for books to be written specifically for the readership in this or that country.

The names of which Soviet authors are most often encountered in VAAP

discrimination against Soviet literature on the Western book market, with some quarters finding it advantageous to limit the access of people in their countries to Soviet literature and art?

I do, if "feel" is the right word in the context of, for example, the following fact: in 1985 and 1986 U.S. publishers contracting with VAAP issued several times fewer Soviet literary works in the United States than the number of books by U.S. authors put out in the U.S.S.R. Over the past three years Soviet theatregoers have been able to see 154 productions of plays by 31 U.S. dramatists, compared with just 20 Soviet plays staged in the U.S. under contracts with VAAP over the past 12 years. There are similar imbalances in cultural exchanges with our partners in Britain, the F.R.G. and other NATO countries.

It is our deep conviction that the diligent spreading of anti-Soviet myths is a violation of the Helsinki commitments related to the so-called "third basket." Publishers and distributors of cultural values are under pressure to stop cooperating with socialist countries.

In other cases that constitute a direct breach of the Helsinki accords on extending free communication and personal contacts, VAAP representatives have been without valid reasons denied visas to enter capitalist countries to attend international events.

It is one of VAAP's proclaimed goals to "propagandize Soviet books abroad." What does this mean? Is it worth promoting a poor book and does a good one need advertizing?

The attitude to the word "propaganda" in the West is one of the same apprehensive suspicion with which the word "advertizing" has until very recently been treated in this country. Divorced from their original meaning, they have acquired what can be described as negative connotations. In the book trade, however, the two words mean basically the same thing: propaganda is the propagation of ideas, including artistic ones, while the advertising of works of literature and art is neither more nor less than their popularization. Far from being worth promoting and advertising, a poor book, to my mind, should not be published at all. But even the very best book, like any other worthwhile work of science, literature or art, definitely needs publicity. In our case this means that VAAP should advise its foreign partners promptly and competently of everything that is noteworthy on the Soviet cultural scene. The agency includes an information-cum-advertizing association, VAAP-Inform, which publishes bulletins, newsletters, prospectuses and catalogues in Russian and foreign languages.

Some of our readers believe that far from every book published in the U.S.S.R. should be allowed to come out abroad. They have in mind books dealing with tragic pages in the history of our country. What do you think of that view?

Literature is an artistic generalization of the historical experience of a nation. History ceases to be itself the moment people begin editing and retouching it and reading whatever they like to see into it. It was believed in this country until recently that if we kept silent about an undesirable phenomenon, it would be as if it had never happened. Confident of the indissoluble unity of the people and their moral strength and health, the Communist Party is not afraid of telling the truth. A "truth for domestic consumption" and a "truth for export" just do not exist. The fewer gaps there are for people abroad in understanding our life and history, the harder it is for the West to manipulate public opinion and push tendentious information about the Soviet state and its policies. Openness is an irresistible and invincible weapon in the struggle with the false rumours and calumnies that make up the arsenal of psychological warfare waged against our country.

■

Kabuki in Moscow

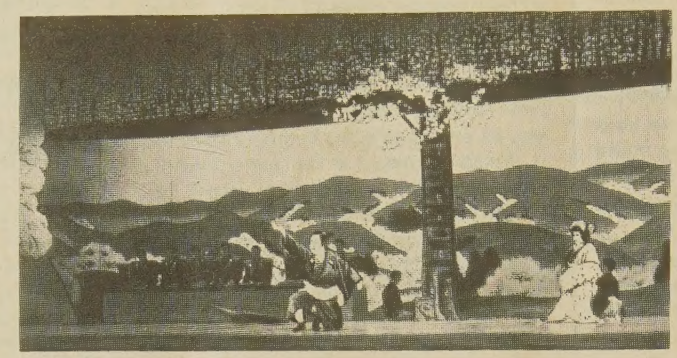
This is the Kabuki theatre's third visit to the U.S.S.R.: Muscovites saw it for the first time in 1928. And in the summer of 1961 I myself, at that time just beginning my diplomatic career, witnessed Muscovites' warm appreciation of Kabuki performances at the Vakhtangov theatre. In the packed hall one sensed the admiration for the actors and the keen perception of what was taking place on the stage - as if a spiritual bridge had been built between the two nations.

This time the Kabuki tour will also include Leningrad and Tbilisi, and it is in a sense symbolic: it is the first major undertaking organized by the Japanese side after the agreement on cultural exchanges signed in Tokyo last year. And I hope that this tour will serve to strengthen mutual understanding and help our peoples to get to know each other better.

Several books about Kabuki have been published in the Soviet Union. However, for those who have had no opportunity to read them, I should like to tell about the theatre, its aesthetics, actors and the place Kabuki holds in the life of Japan today.

Kabuki first appeared in the second half of the 16th century and has now achieved classical perfection. Although the period of its greatest flourishing is in the past, in our times too the theatre is very popular with the Japanese people and attracts large audiences.

Until Kabuki made its appearance, the Japanese people had never seen such colourful, emotional and distinctive performances. In the past the theatre was popular chiefly with merchants. That section of the population had achieved material prosperity, but remained at the bottom of the social ladder because it did not belong to the warrior class. Therefore the



main theme of Kabuki plays was the conflict between man and the feudal system. It was thanks to its humanist content that this form of art was perpetrated.

A distinctive feature of the Kabuki theatre is that all the women's parts are played by male actors, who are called onnagata. There was a time when women predominated among the cast. But many actresses began to enjoy too much attention from their admirers. In 1629 the authorities decided that this could lead to a loosening of public morals and banned women from the stage. This ban remained in force for almost two and a half centuries. By that time the art of the onnagata had been perfected. So when the ban was lifted, there was no place for women on the stage. But, more seriously, the art of the onnagata had by that time become an inseparable part of the theatre's aesthetic, and if it had lost it, it could have lost its individuality forever.

Kabuki has assimilated all the theatrical forms to have existed in Japan. It borrowed elements of the stage techniques and part of the repertoires of the No and Kyogen theatres. Another source from which Kabuki borrowed was the Bunraku puppet theatre. The most important thing in the Kabuki theatre is the actor and his talent, and not the literary merits of a play. At the beginning of the 17th century a number of major writers, including Monzaemon Chikamatsu, often called the Japanese Shakespeare, left Kabuki for the puppet theatre, where they found greater scope for their writings. As a result, puppets pushed live actors into the background. In order to survive, Kabuki introduced into its repertoire practically all the plays staged by the puppet theatre.

The beauty of the formal style is one of the aesthetic principles on which the art of Kabuki is based. This style, although at the beginning it was geared to realism, gradually acquired a rigid symbolic form. Ordinary gestures and movements bear a close resemblance to dances. Practically every gesture is accompanied by music. Symbolism has been brought to such a high level of abstraction that traditional acting no longer corresponds to the rational interpretation of a role. In fact it contradicts it.

Even in a realistic everyday play, for the actor the main thing is not his naturalness, but his oratory. The text, especially long soliloquies, are delivered in a melo-declamatory style, which is something midway between singing and speaking. Dialogues and monologues often have a musical accompaniment.

Theatre experts unanimously agree that the sets, costumes and makeup of Kabuki are the most exotic and colourful in the world. And probably the theatre owes the popularity it enjoys today to its picturesque style and its remarkable range of colours.

When a historical or everyday play is produced, the music begins to play the moment the curtain goes up, as if awakening to life the somnolent atmosphere that prevailed on the stage. The main instrument (something like the balalaika) is the shamisen. The musicians sit in the left-hand corner of the stage, but are invisible to the audience.

Most Kabuki classical plays were written by playwrights who worked especially for that theatre. They knew the strong and weak sides of the individual actors, the kinds of role they liked and their mannerisms, and so they sought to write plays best suited to their individual talents.

Kabuki acting techniques are based on experience that is passed on from generation to generation. There are families where Kabuki acting traditions have been passed down for 17 generations. On the one hand, in feudal times respect for family traditions was very strongly ingrained. And on the other, the art of Kabuki by its nature requires long preparation and a vast amount of experience, and it was therefore in the family that conditions for its development proved ideal.

There was a time when the actor played only that part in which he had attained perfection. Today such specialization is less often to be found.

The history of world theatre shows that when dramatic art reaches perfection, it can stand the test of time, even if its literary content is removed from the day's realities. That is what happened with Kabuki. The theatre does not of course reflect the life of present-day Japan, which has undergone an intensive process of Europeanization. But in spite of this, it remains Japan's pride, and enjoys the affection of its people.

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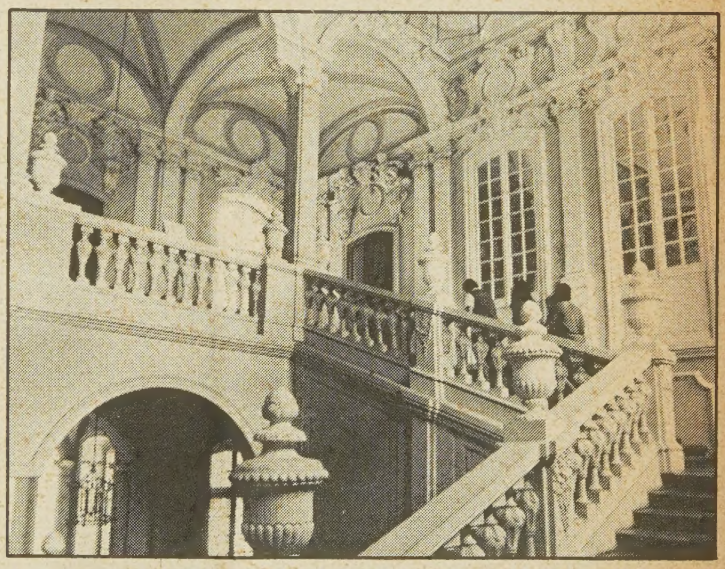
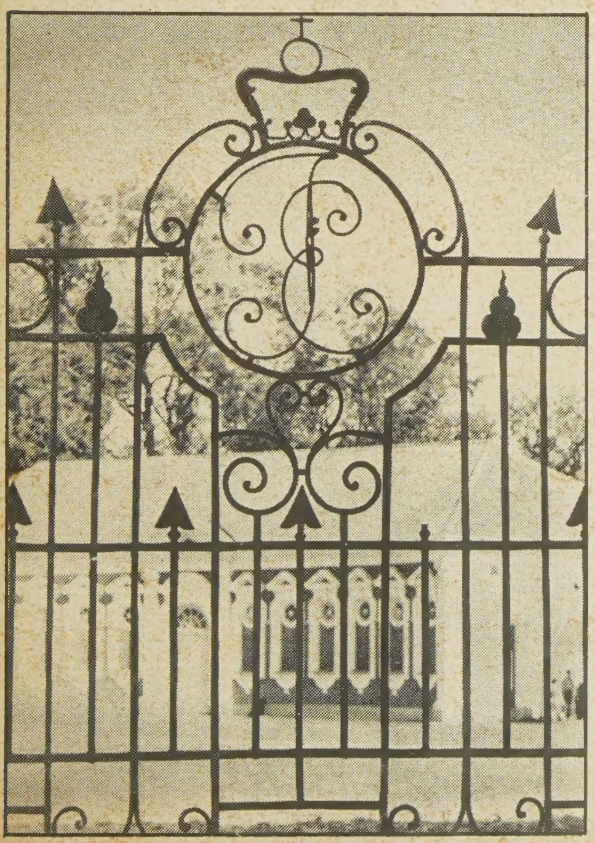
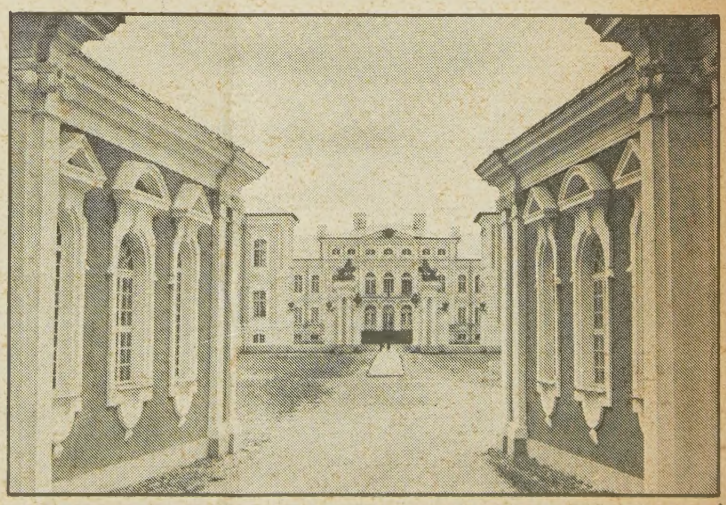
Against the background of old austere Gothic architecture, the Rundale Palace, situated in the heart of Latvia, strikes a festive note. It was designed and built by the outstanding architect of 18th-century Russia Rastrelli, and is rated highly among his early masterpieces.

Time and wars did not spare the palace. Restoration work on it has been going on since 1972. Old furniture, paintings and sculpture from museums and private collections will grace the restored interior. Experts from Moscow, Leningrad and other union republics are helping Latvian specialists in this work.

They are giving Rundale a new lease of life. The main staircase. Grille with the ducal crown of Courland. View of the main building of the palace.







Four horsemen. Canvas, oil 200×200. 1985.

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MAN AND MANKIND

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